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THOUGHTS

ON PARTS OF THE

PROPHECY OF ISAIAH.

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THOUGHTS

ON PARTS OF THE

PROPHECY OF ISAIAH.

BY

BENJAMIN WILLS NEWTON.

VOL. I.

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CORRIGENDA.

The reader is requested to correct with a pen or pencil such errata as are in the subjoined list, marked with an asterisk.

* Page 31, line 16, for *even had to say* read *ever had to say.*

* Page 32, line 24, for *Chron. xxv.* 18 read 2 *Chron. xxv.* 18.

* Page 45, line 6, for *the Flood* read *the Fall.*

* Page 110, line 16, for *prudence and* read *and prudence.*

* Page 111, line 17, for *even acted* read *ever acted.*

Page 129, line 7, for *eclectic* read *ecclectic.*

Page 172, line 19, for εκκλησισ read εκκλησια.

Page 181, for כָּפַרְתָּ read כָּפַרְתָּ.

Page 183, for כפב read כַּפֵּר.

Page 220, for כו read כי.

Page 238, for חנער read הנער.

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THOUGHTS ON ISAIAH I.

WHEN it was said to the watchman, "watchman what of the night?" he answered first, "THE MORNING COMETH." Prominence is ever given by God to the *final* objects of His people's hope. He desires that they should be comforted and apprehend by faith the final joy, before they know the antecedent sorrow. Whatever else may intervene, our hope is glory. We hope for "the morning without clouds." Faith, therefore, ever says, "THE MORNING COMETH." Yet it has to add, "ALSO THE NIGHT." Although already in the night, we nevertheless wait for the night: for the darkest part of the night—that which is emphatically *night*, immediately precedes the morning. Depth of darkness heralds the day-star. Accordingly, we wait for both. We expect the morning; but we expect also the coming of that which is emphatically *night*. It is the object of the prophecy of Isaiah (as indeed of all prophecy) to treat of both these things—to teach us respecting the coming day of brightness, and also respecting the coming night of evil.

Yet we are not concerned with light, only as it shall be in the future day of its millennial brightness; or with darkness, only as it will be in the final hour of

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its concentration under Antichrist. We have also to do both with darkness and light in the incipient and fragmentary forms under which they are already developed. Prophecy, though pointing to the future, yet founds its lessons on the past. The matured form of evil's last development is but the ripening of principles long germinant. Every harvest has its seed-time. Except Israel and Christendom had done what they respectively have done for the corruption of Truth and the establishment of falsehood, Antichristianism would never be what it will be. The conflict between light and darkness is no new conflict. It has ever been carried on in the earth since sin first entered. The past, therefore, not less than the future, has its lessons for the servants of the Truth.

Accordingly, the first chapter of this prophecy treats mainly of the past. It reviews the course that Israel had from the beginning trodden. Isaiah called on them to consider their ways and to repent: but they would not. And now the record of those ways is presented to *us*— "written for our admonition." Christendom is asked whether it can discern no parallelism between Israel's past history and its own? It is no little mercy to be instructed through the example of others. What if that mercy also be despised?

One of the most cherished thoughts of man is, that they are competent, if only sufficiency of light be given, to follow where light leads. Man deems himself able to respond to every claim made by God on his obedience, and asks for a Teacher when really he needs a Saviour.

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Accordingly, in Israel this vaunted ability of man was tested. They said that they would obey perfectly in everything: yet when tried they obeyed in nothing. Though again and again pardoned, they again and again trespassed. Instruction, warning, chastisement, were all in vain. They transgressed so that even the very heathen loathed their abominations. "The name of God," said the Apostle, "is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." And yet, notwithstanding all this, though "the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint," they refused to recognise their condition and to acknowledge their guilt.

On the contrary, they claimed to appear before God as His accepted worshippers. As their guilt deepened, so the activities of their ritualistic services increased. "Who hath required this at your hands to tread my courts?" They appeared before Him with their incense and oblations, and feasts, and solemn assemblies, and spread forth their hands to make many prayers, whilst yet their sins which were as scarlet remained unrepented of and unforsaken. When the heart becomes hardened into extreme distance from God, it fails to apprehend the accumulated guiltiness caused by the attempt to worship outwardly Him whom it serves not inwardly. The awful discrepancy between words of holiness and ways of wickedness is not discerned. It seems as if men believed that sound had power to sanctify. It seems as if they thought that they make God their debtor if only they profess themselves to be His worshippers, and condescend occasionally to make

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with their lips honourable mention of His name. And thus lip-worship (the very thought of which should strike the soul with terror) is made a ground on which self-righteousness founds for itself a claim of merit. Mercy and grace must under such circumstances be despised, for he who can plead merit has no reason to seek refuge in grace: nor can he who deems lip-worship acceptable have any true apprehension either of sin, of holiness, or of God.

One of the chief lessons taught by the history of Israel is the effect of mere ritualistic religion. Ritualism, sacerdotalism, and tradition reigned in Israel. By them Israel was morally fashioned. And what was the result? Did they become lovers of light? The Prophets brought to them light, bright, holy and blessed; but the light they quenched, and those who brought it they destroyed. At last Immanuel came. His mission was attested by Scripture, attested by miracle, attested by the voice of the Father from heaven, attested by His own superhuman perfectness (for He brought into earth the perfectness of Heaven) yet they closed their eyes to all this evidence; they "hid their faces from Him;" Him in whom the Father delighted, they execrated. And when the Holy Ghost was sent, and when many appeared amongst them whose lives and testimony attested the presence of the living power of God, them too they hated. All who came within their own ritualistic circle (even though manifestly the servants of unrighteousness and of iniquity) they honoured: but all who stood without (even though marked with the lineaments

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of heaven) they loathed and persecuted. Such is ever the path of Ritualism. The present Ritualism of Christendom accepts and loads with honours the most vicious among men, if only they "conform" to their traditional order; but the holiest on earth if they "conform" not, are pronounced accursed, or else consigned to the uncovenanted mercies of God. The men who do these things boast that they are "successors of the Apostles," and that "the blood of the Apostles flows in their veins." There have ever been false Apostles transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ, but their end shall be according to their works. "Thou hast tried them who say they are Apostles and are not, and hast found them liars." Apostolic claims should be sustained by apostolic miracles, apostolic doctrines, apostolic practices. Where false claims are carelessly accepted, it is an evidence that they who accept them are *willingly* deceived. They wish to be distant from the pure light of truth. Men love a lie when the lie pleases them. Oh that men would remember the doom pronounced on "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." "Blessed are they that wash their garments (οἱ πλυνοντες τας στολας αυτων) that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the City. Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie"—(πας φιλων και ποιων ψευδος).—There are no lies of greater heinousness than religious lies.

Well would it have been for Christendom if it had

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learned the lesson which Israel's fall was designed to teach; but it might almost be supposed (so close has been the parallelism) that Christendom had studied Israel's history with the view of seeking, rather than of avoiding, the shoals on which they foundered. Which of the descriptions of iniquity in the chapter before us —which of its denunciations is not as applicable to Christendom as to Israel? "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. . . . . When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Ye shall not go on [continue] to bring lying oblation: incense—it is to me abomination; so are new moons and sabbath, and the calling of the assembly; *I cannot bear iniquity and solemn meeting* . . . . . And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide my face from you: and when ye multiply prayer I am one that heareth not; your hands are full of blood." And yet the sacrifices of Israel were not inventions of their own. They were ordained of God as types of that one great Sacrifice which has now been once and for ever offered. Their sin consisted not in offering sacrifice, but in offering it with unclean hands: whereas the self-appointed priesthood of Christendom have dared to devise a worship and sacrifice of their own. They have invented for themselves a sacrifice, whereby the great declaration of God that "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin" is nullified. They affirm that further sacrifice for sin *is* needed: they pretend that they offer day by day an atoning sacrifice for the sins of the living and

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the dead. Not only are their hearts and their lips unclean, but their act in sacrificing is rebellion.

The great doctrine of Christianity is that the Son of God has redeemed, and by redeeming has made heirs of glory all who believe on His saving name. As men we owe unto God a double debt—a debt of obedience; and having failed in that, a debt of suffering. Both these claims have been met for all God's believing people. In their stead Immanuel has obeyed: in their stead Immanuel has suffered. In Him God has become God our Redeemer: even as He was before God our Creator. Thus believers are constituted righteous—thus by the declared sentence of God they are justified, and justification brings to glory,—"whom He justified, them He also glorified."

This cardinal doctrine of our holy faith was maintained in its purity while the Apostles lived. The Churches were for a time epistles of Christ—living expressions of His mind. But after the death of the Apostles nothing could exceed the rapidity of the decay. The declension of Israel after the death of Joshua was not more rapid. Whilst the Apostles lived, the cause of the fall of Israel was recognised. The difference between a Covenant of works and a Covenant of grace was apprehended. Israel had voluntarily placed themselves under a Covenant of works, and had undertaken to earn blessing for themselves by rendering a perfect unsinning obedience unto God. They said that they would enter into life by keeping faithfully God's commandments. They refused to be brought under that

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"better Covenant" in which God undertakes on the ground of the substitutional obedience and suffering of Another to give freely all that is needful for life and glory. The Apostles, and they over whom they watched, apprehended this. They apprehended the reason of Israel's fall, and gloried in the grace which Israel had despised. For a time the testimonies of Christianity went forth as brightness. But as soon as the Apostles died the Churches lapsed. Christendom corrupted itself. Having for its mission to bear the testimonies of grace into a world that could not answer to the claims of righteousness, it soon ceased to testify either to righteousness, or to grace. It became worldly; corrupted the gospel; identified itself with the philosophy and secularism of the age; quenched by Tradition the light of Scripture, and claimed for its self-created priesthood powers which the Apostles themselves had not—powers which belong exclusively to God. Thus the great modern Instructress of Christendom claims to be able to give faith. Her first address to the poor babe when dragged into her net and brought to the threshold of her, so-called temple, is, "What dost thou demand of the Church of God?" And the answer put in the lips of the unconscious suckling is, "FAITH." They who can give faith, can no doubt give salvation: for they must be as God.*

* The order of Baptism in the Church of Rome commences thus. The priest advancing to meet those who have brought the infant to the threshold of the Church, says, What dost thou seek of the Church of God?

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The spheres in which post-apostolic Christianity has developed itself have been three. First, in the Patriarchate Churches of the East—over whom, because of their corruptions, Mahomedanism early swept as the scourge of God. But they have not repented. The next great sphere was Western Europe. There we have seen the reign of Romanism. What Truth is there that Romanism has not either mutilated or destroyed? By the fiction of continued *authoritative* inspiration, like that vouchsafed to the Apostles, it has exalted its own Traditions, and degraded Scripture: and thereby set itself in rebellion against the one only Legislator. The next and latest sphere is that in which Protestanism has acted.

The mercies which God vouchsafed to Judah and Jerusalem whilst separate from idolatrous Israel, were not greater than those which He has granted to the Protestant section of Christendom. Protestantism was, in Luther and others, the necessary result of exercised con-

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The godfather replies: Faith.

Priest. What does faith procure to thee?

Godfather. Eternal life.

Priest. If then thou desireth to enter into life, keep the commandments. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself.

Thus these persons who pretend to do what the Apostles themselves could not do, namely, *give faith*, end by giving no faith at all, but preach justification by works. Salvation by grace through faith they know not. How awful the words of the Apostle to such; "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

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sciences seeking to obey God. They separated from corrupt and idolatrous Christendom on the same principle on which Moses separated the Tabernacle from the Camp of Israel when Israel were bowing down before the golden Calf. Moses *pitched the Tabernacle without the camp,* and called on all who were on the Lord's side to join him there. Israel was itself a separated body. They had been separated from Egypt, and stood in contrast therewith: but when they who had been thus separated became themselves idolatrous, a SECOND separation was required. It was needful that they too should be separated from. Such was the position that Protestantism assumed towards ostensibly separated Christendom. It is necessarily an antagonistic position —admitting of no compromise. Israel *professedly* repented: but Ritualistic Christendom has not. It cleaves to its idolatries, and to tradition.

To maintain the sole authority of the Word of God against those who had been brought by Tradition into superstitions and idolatries not less debasing than those of Paganism, was a high and holy object. But much faith, much light, much close obedience, much personal grace was needed—the more so, because recurrence to the Word of God, after long departure from it, was sure to disclose abundant weakness and failure, even in those whose hearts were true and faithful. So was it with the remnant of Israel in the days of Nehemiah. When first they heard again the Word of God, from which they had long been severed, they rejoiced: but as soon as they had pondered on it, and discovered the extent of

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their departure from its commandments and their great present feebleness, they wept. But weakness, if there be confession, affords scope for the mercies of God. He is not one who, when there is repentance, upbraideth with the past. He bends in grace to the condition of His people, as He did to Israel then, saying, "Let joy in Jehovah be your strength." But trustfulness in God implies separation from His enemies. They who in Ezra's time sought to rebuild the Temple of the Lord, declined the proffered co-operation of the stranger. They shunned even his aid—much more his control; and so, trusting in the Lord they prospered. They knew that none save the people of the Lord can really work for the Lord. Jehoshaphat chose to link himself with Ahab. But what was the result? He defied the admonitions of God, persecuted God's servant who delivered them, and was driven dishonoured from the battle-field.

It is not my purpose here to enlarge on the causes of the corruption of Protestantism. This at least is obvious. It did not, in the days of its early development, avoid Jehoshaphat-like alliances with those who knew not God. It did not steadily act upon the principle, "my kingdom is not of this world." It did not recognise that until the day of man ends, the *secular* as well as the ecclesiastical systems of the world remain unreached by, and hostile to, the Truth as it is in Jesus. Ecclesiasticism was dreaded, but Secularism was hoped in; as if Herod might be confided in if only Caiaphas were eschewed. Accordingly, the records of professing Protestantism

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add another dark and blood-stained page to the world's evil history. The course of Protestant Episcopacy, in Scotland more especially, has been tracked with blood. Nevertheless Protestantism has been the sphere in which Truth has found a shelter. Apart from Protestantism what would have become of Scripture-Truth? Catholicism would have proscribed it and banished it from the earth.

But where God works for good there Satan chiefly works for evil. It would be vain to deny that there have risen up in the midst of Protestant Christendom a band of men whose enmity against God's Truth as revealed in Scripture, has seldom, perhaps never, been exceeded. Their very acquaintance with light has given bitterness as well as potency to their enmity. Hatred cannot display itself against that which it knows not: but that which encompasses us closely we must either hate or love. Protestantism has stood within a circle of great and blessed light: apostate Protestants, therefore, know better than others what they hate—what they betray. Judas-like, they avail themselves of their knowledge of Truth to destroy it. They betray what they once professed to love. Having stood for a season within the circle of light, they withdraw from it—renounce it—blaspheme it. They count the blood of the covenant wherewith they were professedly sanctified an unholy thing, and do despite unto the spirit of grace. "Withdrawal unto perdition" (ὑποστολη εις απωλειαν) is written over their heads.

Long ago, while the developments of Rationalistic

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infidelity among the German Protestants was in its infancy, a pastor in Germany wrote as follows:

"The unmerited goodness of God has brought me to the "seventy-fourth year of my life, and nearly to the fiftieth "of my pastoral labours. During this long career countless "changes have occurred, largely affecting men within and "beyond the pale of Christianity, but not, as it seems to me, "for the better. Persecution in matters of conscience has "passed away, and cruelties are unknown in matters of reli-"gion; but, on the other hand, there is dominant an un-"measured license and a shameless frivolity in speaking and "writing of spiritual things. Unbelief has seated itself upon "the throne of Superstition. Every one feels as free to ridi-"cule Holy Writ as to read it. Good and excellent institu-"tions are established, but injustice, cruelty, ignorance, and "disobedience, do not seem to be diminished. Science is "fostered, but morals are not mended. Men hope to become "known for learning rather than for a Godfearing spirit. "This is my thought when I compare present times with "past. Those I do not despise, and these I cannot wholly "praise. Many things have been changed rather than bet-"tered. What is old is looked at on its dark side, and what "is new on its bright one."

This was written in 1770. Since then what history can be more awful than that of Germany. Blasphemous infidelity has swept over it like a plague. The so-called philosophic Christianity of Germany has refused to believe any thing that its own consciousness attests not, or that its own feeling approves not. Adherence to a strict interpretation of Scripture has been ridiculed and reviled. Man has sat in judgment upon God. Old

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intellectual and religious notions (it has been boastfully said) have been as much shattered by the moral revolution in Germany, as were old governmental ideas by the political revolution in France. Germany has gloried in its dethronement of Tradition, *and of Scripture too.* It has sought to break every fetter that is not self-imposed. Yet it has not been able to rid itself of the chastening hand of God. Devastating wars and other judgments have fallen on it in quick succession. Yet it has not repented. And now England, whence, it is said, the poison first emanated,* is greedily imbibing it, and rushing madly on in the same path of ruin. Although society in England may seem for the present to be hesitating between the rival claims of Sacerdotalism and Latitudinarianism, the hesitation will be of no long continuance. Governmentally, England has already given in her adhesion to the latter.

A few months ago† Sacerdotalism in Rome gathered together her strength, and once again repeated her claim to be the spiritual Mistress of the world. There has seldom, if ever, been a greater display of her mitred power. Once again in high sounding words of emptiness she promulgated her dogmas, and would fain have

* "In the eighteenth century William Tindal, Thomas Morgan, and Lord Bolingbroke, inaugurated this infidel movement. We confine ourselves to the last named, because he formed as it were the step of transition to the French deists, who worked more directly upon the Germans than the English did. Bolingbroke is the real precursor of Voltaire."—*Hagenbach's German Rationalism*, p. 43.

† In June, 1867.

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awed the nations into submission. But she has a rival, and a dangerous one. At the very same moment there was another and far more comprehensive gathering of peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings, in that vast Temple of Human Fraternity which art, and science, and commerce have reared in Paris. Rome may assemble her priests and prelates, but Man's Temple in Paris can gather all nations. Not that it belongs to Paris, or to any other people. Its platform is as wide as earth. Men of all creeds and of all conditions, priests and people, princes and peasants, Mahomedans, Brahmins, Jews and Greeks, men who have a religion, and men who have no religion, have a common interest there. Fellowship in earthly things is the object. Men congregate there as lords of the earth, resolved on developing and mastering its resources. They meet to praise and honour one another for the triumphs of the past, and to encourage for triumphs to come. Religious truth, whether real or pretended, must draw no circle of restrictiveness *there*, nor interpose any barrier to the happy fraternity of man as man. Even if Truth were a certain thing, it would be well, they think, to immolate it on the altar of universal concord: but seeing that Neology and Philosophy have shown that it is an *un*certain thing, why (say they) should we be expected to contend for a phantom? Can we wonder then that governments and peoples with tendencies like these should look favourably on Neology? Neology has fought well for them against the authority of revealed Truth, and has cleared the way for their expansive

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system—a system accommodating enough to give even Christianity a place if it will consent to be received as one among many "modes of thought." Nothing indeed is excluded save the authoritative, pure Truth of God; and that must be excluded because it claims, necessarily and rightfully claims, *supremacy*—a claim that ill suits those whose great object is to please all men—to gratify by acquiescence, and to conciliate by compromise. Such a system it is evident will command an influence that it is utterly impossible for restrictiveness to gain. Accordingly, the exclusiveness even of Mahomedanism and Judaism are beginning to yield. As to secularized Protestantism it has long coveted this widened way; and even Roman Sacerdotalism, though struggling still, will sooner or later be obliged to succumb before a system of truthlessness mightier and more attractive than its own.*

* Since the above was written Pan-Anglicanism with its semi-popish doctrines has, by its Synod, sought to strengthen itself and to form for itself a kind of governmental centre in Lambeth. But *in England*, Pan-Anglicanism has a master, and a strong one. The State appoints its Bishops; controls its revenues; makes and (by the Privy Council Committee) administers its laws. If therefore Latitudinarianism rules in the State (and can any one doubt this?) what becomes of Sacerdotalism in the Convocation? It must finally succumb. We know that all the countries of the ἡ οἰκουμενη, the Roman world—eastern and western (and of these England is one) will finally give themselves up to Latitudinarianism and Antichrist. Neology has already attained a legalised standing in the Established Church: and there can be little doubt that the Establishment *in England*, while it continues, will become one of the most potent instruments in the world for introducing the reign

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Such are the principles with which Western Europe is now entering, with the view of reviving, those ancient countries of the East which were the seats of the world's early civilization. From Egypt, Jerusalem, Assyria, Asia Minor and Greece, have emanated the laws and institutions which have abidingly stamped their impress upon the whole earth. Around those names the history of human greatness in its earliest developments revolves. But all this greatness has been laid low. It has been smitten down under the righteous judgments of God because of its iniquity. Now, however, men have resolved to revive it;* and for a season they will

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of Latitudinarianism. Doctrinal Romanism and Neology can alike find a place in it and be honoured.

In the Colonies it is not impossible that Anglicanism may secure for itself free action, and may perhaps succeed in upholding those sacerdotal and ritualistic doctrines of which we now hear so much. But when the Master of the feast comes to inspect the guests that have gathered around His table, will He recognise as meet for His presence the robe that Ritualism has given to its servants? Will He not say—"Friend how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless." This parable bears on the Teachers of Christendom no less solemnly than those which precede it bear on the Teachers of Israel. "When *the chief-priests and Pharisees* had heard His parables, they perceived that He spake of them." Matt. xxi. 45.

* "The remembrance of the greatness of those countries (writes the Emperor of the French) inspires a very natural wish, namely, that henceforth the jealousy of the great powers may no longer prevent the East from shaking off the dust of centuries, and from being born again to life and civilization." Life of Cæsar. Vol. I. p. 163.

See also the following extract from the letter of the Paris cor-

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succeed. Indeed, we see the hoped-for renovation already commenced. If we compare the present condition of Egypt, or Jerusalem, or Smyrna, or Nineveh, with their condition at the commencement of the present century, the extent of their revival will be seen. No doubt it is as yet in its infancy; but it will advance

respondent of "The Times." It is published in that Journal, November 8th, 1867:—

"Some twelve years ago a French priest, the Abbé Michon, wrote a little pamphlet recommending, as the best means of promoting the unity of Italy, and of satisfying the wishes and requirements of Catholicity, the transfer of the Papacy from Rome to Jerusalem, the cradle of Christianity. The pamphlet attracted some attention at the time, but was soon afterwards forgotten. The subject is again mooted by a gentleman of a liberal and cultivated mind, and who is already known for his writings, principally on ethnological subjects. M. d'Eichthal has addressed a letter to the *Temps* advocating Jerusalem as 'the metropolis of the great Christian society.' It is from Jerusalem, he says, that the Law of the one and universal God was spread over the world. It is there that, in contact with Asia and Europe, Greek civilization, introduced by the successes of Alexander, and Roman civilization, by the legions of Pompey, were found to meet. And it is there that, from the alliance and combination of those three great Powers, at the voice of Jesus, Christianity was founded. In the Middle Ages, while the Jews turned their eyes incessantly towards the Holy City, the Latins, Greeks, and Mussulmans disputed with each other its possession; and it was during that conflict they were preparing themselves by this very contact for higher destinies. In the present day the force of tradition calls to Jerusalem all who, in one form or another, believe in the Bible. While under the tolerant sovereignty of the Sultan the Latin Catholics and the Orthodox Greeks group their chapels round the Holy Sepulchre, while the Protestants instal their Bishop in the Holy City, and the Pope establishes his Legate there, Russia, Austria, France, England, the Israelites multiply their schools

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until "the rivers of Cush"—the Nile and the Euphrates, again become the great commercial arteries of the world. Israel with all their intelligence, and wealth, and commercial aptitude (some among them speaking the language of every known people upon earth) will return

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and hospitals. And, at the same time, by the increasing facility of communication, by the vicinity of the Isthmus of Suez, by the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, by Syria and Egypt, new life and vigour are being restored to that spot so long deserted. According as civilization returns towards the East, and penetrates into Africa, Jerusalem, the historical centre, is again becoming the material centre of the world:—

"'Rome has been the capital of militant Christianity. So long as it was a question of the submission of the barbarians, peoples and Kings, who had invaded the West, to the Christian law, it was at Rome that the heads of Western Christianity established their seat. There they had the lessons and the prestige of Italian civilization, and it is thus they were able to fulfil their mission. But now that the work is long since completed, that the barbarians of old are become modern Christian nations, the maintenance of a so-called Christian metropolis at Rome is as opposed to common sense as the maintenance of an unchangeable Catholic dogma is an anachronism. So long as it rules or merely has its seat in Rome, so long as it claims to remain apart from the movement of modern life, and, I venture to say, from the true spirit of Christianity, the Papacy will continue to be isolated and powerless. On the other hand, the day on which it will be sincerely reconciled with the world, associated in its labours, its joys and sorrows, when it shall really turn the religious influence it possesses towards the moral and material well-being of peoples, the day the Papacy shall have made such progress it will understand that it is not at Rome but at Jerusalem that the theatre of its destinies must be fixed. It will at the same time understand on what conditions it may, in this new home, merit the rank it claims of being called the leading representative of Christian faith and thought, and that day also we shall see the end of its struggles with Italy.'"

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to their land and reconstitute themselves there, with Egypt on their right hand, and Assyria on their left—triple pillars apparently of the world's prosperity. Many when they see it will be ready to say that the days of evil are gone, and the hour of promised prosperity come. They will think that Israel has become "a third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the earth: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance." Indeed, already this and similar passages in Isaiah have been applied to the present revival of civilization in Egypt. It is infatuation: yet not greater, perhaps, than that that has dictated previous interpretations of this passage. Isaiah has long become a sealed book to Christendom. When conscience slumbers and ceases to distinguish good from evil, Prophecy if read, will only the more deeply blind.*

And now, although Christendom has given no heed to the lessons of the past, though it seems to think that it has never trodden God's courts unbidden—never offerred vain oblations—never held solemn assemblies that have been in God's sight abomination—though it

* Thus *Vitringa*, after an elaborate disquisition, comes to the conclusion that "the great Saviour sent by Jehovah to Egypt (see Is. xix. 20) was Alexander the Great:" and that the time when Egypt becomes, with Israel and with Assyria a blessing in the midst of the earth, was when the Ptolemies ruled over it. There are few periods at which Egypt has more been a sink of corruption than under them. Yet even Barnes assents to this interpretation of Vitringa!

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has failed to discern the parallelism between Israel's past history and its own, will it continue with like indifference to view the future also? Will it close its eyes to the character of that now approaching hour when latitudinarianized Judaism and latitudinarianized Gentilism will unite their energies to revive, not for God, but for Antichristianism and Antichrist, those ancient countries of the East where godless civilization found its birth place, and where for the last time it will concentrate its energies against God? Will Christendom refuse to hear what the Prophets have spoken respecting that coming climax of human evil—that night of which the watchman warns us, saying, "the morning cometh, and also THE NIGHT,"—that night for which Christendom has been steadily labouring? Had it not been for Christendom's corruptions, antichristian lawlessness would never be what it will be.

Christendom, however, will not believe this. It turns a deaf ear to the lessons of the future as well as of the past. A large part of it, therefore, will fall under the full power of that "strong delusion" that is to be sent. Fascinated and deluded by the brightness with which Satan will illumine that coming period (which will be at once the night of truth's sorrow and the day of the unredeemed earth's jubilee) they will be lured on to abandon all that they retain of the knowledge of God, till they give themselves over wholly to the great Deceiver. The early seats of Christianity will be those in which Antichristianism will peculiarly reign.

Let us not then delude ourselves with the thought

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that either this chapter or any other chapter that speaks of judgment poured out either on Jerusalem, or Egypt, or Assyria, or Edom, or Tyre, or Damascus, or Moab, is finally accomplished. The judgments which have visited those nations are but incipient and premonitory. The desolations which have been, are but foreshadowings of that which is yet to be. The concluding verse of this first chapter—"the strong shall be as tow, and his work as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them," is not yet accomplished, and pertains as much to the apostates out of Christendom as to the apostates of Israel. A common web is being woven by latitudinarianized Gentiles and latitudinarianized Jews, and they will partake of a common doom.

But though the darkness that is coming on will be fearfully comprehensive in its scope, it will not be universal. There shall still be a remnant. Some eyes shall be opened to see: some ears to hear. And when the departed glory of countries long fallen shall for a season be revived and rise from the grave of ages, and men shall exult in the expectation of a new and regenerated age, there shall be some in whose hearts and lips the long-buried testimonies of the Prophets shall revive also. They too shall rise as from the grave and throw the light of heaven on the satanic scene, and guide some through it, in paths of honour, though they may be paths of suffering, on to the glory of the eternal day.

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NOTES ON ISAIAH I.

Verse 1.

The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah.] As the vision is said to have extended over the reign of four kings, this verse must be regarded as the preface, not of the first chapter only, but of the whole book.

The vision is expressly said to be "*concerning Judah and Jerusalem.*" Whatever else may be introduced collaterally, they are the especial subjects of the Prophecy. *Jerusalem* is the centre around which the great events of earth revolve. There Christ glorified God: there Antichrist will glorify himself. There Christ was crucified: there Antichrist will be adored. There the curses that come from the unappeased holiness of Sinai have fallen and will fall: there the blessings that come from the appeased holiness of Zion will in due time be made manifest in their fulness.

The meaning of Isaiah's name is "*Jehovah will save.*" Although his prophecy teems with denunciations of coming judgment, yet he was also sent to declare the coming of Immanuel—the Rock laid in Zion, and "he that believeth thereon shall not be confounded."

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Whatever the darkness, whatever the apostasy, whatever the manifestation of Satan's power, all shall be made to pass away before the might of the name of IMMANUEL like darkness before the rising sun—like chaff before the whirlwind. It shall be recognised at last that Jehovah can save.

In all books of prophecy the commencing visions are wide and comprehensive. Accordingly, the first chapter of Isaiah includes all the period of which the Book as a whole treats. It reaches onward to that still future hour, when Zion, purified by judgment, shall have "her judges restored as at the first, and her counsellors as at the beginning." [See verse 25 and 26.] Subsequent visions, therefore, do but retrace the period, or part of the period included in the first chapter. With the exception of one passage which speaks of the creation of "new heavens and a new earth" after the millennial heavens and earth have passed away, none of the subsequent visions extend beyond the period to which the first chapter brings. The like is true of the visions into which the Book of Daniel and the Revelation are divided. As in Isaiah, so in them, the several visions are not to be read as if chronologically successive. They are supplementary one to the other—the later visions retracing, and bringing out with further detail, points to which earlier visions had more briefly referred.

Whenever Prophecy assumes a prominent place in the instructions of God, it is a sure evidence that evil is progressing, and that judgment is near. Samuel's mission preceded the fall of the priestly house of Eli:

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Isaiah's mission preceded the fall of the royal house of David. Israel and Judah were neither rightly instructed nor rightly led; or if occasionally they were favoured with right leadership, they resisted. Jotham was a king who would have guided them aright, but they would not follow. [See 2 Chron. xxvii. 2.] There is no greater sign of the whole moral framework of society being diseased than when leadership in good is proposed, but rejected.

After the ten tribes had separated themselves from the House of David and sank into vile idolatry, light, mercy, and protective power lingered long around Jerusalem and Judah, until they too so corrupted themselves that it could be said, "backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah." Has Protestantism no lesson to learn from this?

It is a too frequent habit of God's people to deceive themselves as to the signs of the times, by fixing their attention so exclusively on the interventions of God's mercy, as to hide from themselves the tokens of the persistency of the advancing evil. Isaiah's mission and Hezekiah's reign were wonderful interventions of God's mercy toward Jerusalem. But did they stop the course of evil? Manasseh's wickedness followed, and the throne of David sank before Babylon. Since then, how many and how diversified have been the interventions of God's mercy in His dealings both with Israel and with Christendom! But the advance of evil, even though occasionally checked, has not been arrested. It is fast progressing towards its maturity, when the

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threatened judgment, long suspended, will fall at last, and Isaiah's words be accomplished to the full.

Verses 2 and 3.

Hear, O heavens, and give ear O earth: for Jehovah hath spoken, Sons I have nourished and brought up, and they it is who have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

Hear, O heavens, &c.] The prophecy of Moses in Deut. xxxii. commences with like words. Seven centuries had passed, and now the same appeal is again made to heaven and earth as witnesses against Israel.

Some taking the primary force of the Hebrew words render, "*Sons I have made great and high,*" but it is better to retain the translation given in our version. The point emphasized is the fact of their being "sons," and the tender care that had been extended to them as such.

Verse 4.

Ah sinning nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers—sons that are corrupters: they have forsaken Jehovah, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they have gone away [or, *estranged themselves*] *backward.*

Ah sinning nation.] Observe the force of the present participle as denoting essential condition and habitua-

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tion. A people *heavy*, or *weighed down* with iniquity. A seed, i.e. *descendants of evil-doers*. As their fathers were so are they. Sons that are *corrupters of others*, and so perpetuators of iniquity. They have despised the Holy One of Israel, and instead of drawing near to Him that they might acquaint themselves with Him, they have become estranged from Him, and are gone backwards—[*απηλλοτριωθησαν εις τα οπισω. Theodosion* and *Aquila.*]

Verse 5.

Wherefore should ye be stricken any more, ye will add revolt to revolt: the whole* head is for sickness and the whole heart is strengthless.

Why or *wherefore should ye be stricken, &c.*] It is better to adopt this translation with Syriac and Sept., and not to render with Vulgate and others—"*on what part*," or "*where* should ye be stricken any more." [See use of עַל מַה in Mal. ii. 14, "yet ye say *wherefore*, &c.] Of what use is it that ye should be chastened further: your moral disease is so great as to be beyond the power of chastisement. "The whole head is for sickness," i.e. given up to sickness—"the whole

* Be careful *not* to translate with some misled by the omission of the article before כָּל, *every* head, *every* heart. Compare Is. ix. 11, and Ps. cxi. 1: and see "Occasional Papers," Vol. I., No. 1, p. 27, for remarks on similar omission of the Greek Article before *πας*, especially in respect of *πασα οικοδομη, the whole building*, Eph. ii. 21: and *πασα πατρια*, the *whole family* in Eph. iii. 15.

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heart is [דַּוָי] strengthless;" exhausted as when the life-blood has been drained away. See דוה whence דַּוָי.

Verse 6.

From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it; it is wound, and stripe, and fresh stroke. They have not been pressed, and they have not been bound, neither has there been any mollifying with ointment.

Such was their corporate condition morally. They were as one whose body is full both of disease and wound: and all suffered to go on without even an attempt to arrest the progress. Their outward condition was fast becoming like their moral.

Verses 7 and 8.

Your land is desolation, your cities are consumed by fire: your ground, before your eyes strangers are its devourers, and it is a desolation like the overthrow of [that which is overthrown by] *strangers: and the daughter of Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard, like a lodge in a garden of melons* [abandoned when the gathering time is over] *like a beleaguered city.*

Your land is desolation, &c.] Incipient indications of this coming desolation had been already given. In prophetic Scripture incipiency is regarded as the token and pledge of final consummation. Hence the Spirit of God regards the hour of incipiency as being *virtually*

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the hour of maturity, and speaks accordingly. Hundreds of years intervened between the incipient idolatry of Israel in the wilderness, and the captivity of Babylon, yet see how these two periods are associated in the Acts. "They made a calf in those days . . . . ., and I will carry you away beyond Babylon." Acts vii. 41, and Amos v. 26. There were intermediate links, but the two events were as indissolubly associated as are cause and effect. Faith discerns in the incipient form of things features which the world discerns not till the hour of matured development, and it acts accordingly.

Verse 9.

Except Jehovah of Hosts had left unto us a remnant very small, as Sodom we should have been, unto Gomorrah we should have been like.

Except Jehovah, &c.] The true servants of God have even had to say this. It was so in every past period of Israel's history; it is so still, and so it will be at the close; for though Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet (only) a remnant shall return. Nor is it otherwise in Christendom. It may talk great things about Catholicity and the like, but whilst the way remains broad that leadeth to destruction, Catholicity is but the brand of departure from God. Pan-Anglican, or Pan-Roman, or Pan-Hellenic Synods, the more Catholic they are, the more will they be found to dogmatise *against* Scripture and *against* God. To walk with the multitude is to err. Faith knows that in the midst of that

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which *professes* to belong to God, there is but a little remnant that is really His, and with them and for them it counts it all joy to suffer. This remnant is the true treasure for which Christ died. It has ever been the great effort of Satan to harass, mislead, and scatter them: and in this he has succeeded. But he cannot destroy them, for they have a great and faithful Shepherd out of whose hand none shall pluck them. Blessed are they who really seek their welfare by leading them in paths of separateness *according to revealed Truth.* They who are precious as a treasure, should have a certain manifested preciousness and purity like a pearl: but to such purity, Truth only can bring. "Sanctify them by thy truth." Fevered imaginativeness may be mistaken for piety, but it will not guide except to quicksands.

Verses 10 to 17.

Hear the word of Jehovah, ye rulers of Sodom, give ear unto the Law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. Wherefore to me [i.e. why bring ye to me] *the multitude of your sacrifices, saith Jehovah: I am full of the offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts, and the blood of bullocks, and of lambs, and of he-goats, I desire not. When ye come to appear before me, who required this from your hands to trample* [רמס—to tread down or trample as beasts do: see Chron. xxv. 18.] *my courts. Ye shall not go on* [continue] *to bring lying oblation—incense, it is to me abomination*—[or, *abominable incense is this to me.* [So likewise] *new-moon feast, and sabbath, and the calling of the assembly. I cannot bear iniquity and solemn meeting.*

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Your new-moon feasts and convocations my soul hateth; they weigh on me as a burden; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide my face from you: and when ye multiply prayer, I am one that heareth not, your hands are full of blood [bloods]. *Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease from evil, learn to do good, seek judgment, right the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.*"

Can Christendom, whether Anglican, or Romanist, or Greek, read these words and not tremble? Has it not made the same attempt to consecrate worldliness—to associate wicked men and wicked deeds with holy words, holy services, holy prayer, as if worldliness and iniquity could be sanctified by sound? Is a loathsome and corrupting corpse made attractive by being adorned with pearls and costly array? Splendour under such circumstances appals because of the contrast. When the discrepancy between holy words and evil deeds is ignored, it argues either the depth of hypocrisy, or else judicial blindness. It may be that the moral sense has been utterly destroyed—the heart may have ceased to feel.

Verses 18 to 20.

"*Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and hearken, the good of the land ye shall eat; but if ye refuse and rebel, by the sword ye shall be eaten; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.*"

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Come now and let us reason together.] Whether words of proposed mercy, such as these, become in result words of blessing, may be determined by the manner in which they who are addressed regard the "IF" by which the concluding clause is prefaced. "IF ye be willing and obey, &c." Man blind to his own impotence, is ever ready to take the responsibility of that "if" upon himself. He is ready to accept the condition of earning his title to blessing *by making himself* willing and obedient. But to take on ourselves such a responsibility is destruction. The wise in heart know this. They sicken at the thought of such a responsibility: knowing their utter impotence they cast themselves wholly on the grace of God to receive them freely, just as they are, for Christ's sake, and to GIVE them repentance and remission of sins, and to work in them that which is well-pleasing in His sight. So God becomes God our Saviour. Every responsibility as regards that which is needed for salvation is devolved upon Him. We are the clay: He the potter.

That awful "if"—awful and destructive to those who discern not what is involved in it, was first heard by Israel when they entered on their wilderness-sojourn and encamped at Marah. There Jehovah made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there He proved them and said, "IF thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of Jehovah thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought on the

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Egyptians; for I am Jehovah that healeth thee." Exodus xv. 26. At Sinai, Israel formally took upon themselves the responsibility of meeting that IF. They said, we will be willing and obedient; so will we earn; so will we keep our blessings. Blind to their own impotence, they undertook to do that which Immanuel only could do—obey with the perfectness of heaven. Notwithstanding every lesson that has age after age been given, the delusion has deepened on them, and rests on them in all its intensity still. In vain has the justifying righteousness of Immanuel been preached. In vain has it been declared to them that He has been exalted "as a Prince and a Saviour TO GIVE repentance to Israel and remission of sins." They refuse repentance and salvation as a GIFT, and still say that they will earn every blessing for themselves. Therefore, instead of being willing and obedient they remain unwilling and disobedient, and perish in their sins. Nor will it be otherwise, until they shall discern that they are neither willing nor able to turn themselves unto God, and shall in self-renunciation cry to Him and say, "Turn THOU me and I shall be turned; . . . . Surely *AFTER* that I was turned, I repented; and *AFTER* that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh." Jer. xxxi. 18. See also their repentant words in Isaiah xxvi. 12. "Jehovah, THOU wilt appoint peace for us, for all our works also THOU HAST WROUGHT FOR US"—פָּעַלְתָּ לָּנוּ.* Then at last they recognise the distinc-

* For a similar use of ל as meaning for, or on behalf of, see Psalm cxxiv. 1—"unless Jehovah had been for us, &c."

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tion between the New Covenant of grace, and the first covenant of Law that worketh death.

I have already observed that although Christendom professes to recognise this distinction, yet with the Apostles all clear apprehension of it passed away. We cannot say that one of the early Fathers have given or were able to give a clear exposition of the difference of the first and second Covenant as traced in the eighth of the Hebrews. See for example the comment of Theodoret on that chapter, and I know no writer of that period who came nearer to an apprehension of the Gospel than he.*

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* *Theodoret* lived in the fifth century. In commenting on Heb. viii. 6—"But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the Mediator of a better Covenant which is established upon better promises," Theodoret observes: "he [the Apostle] concisely points out what the supreme excellency (of the New Covenant) is. For the Old Covenant had appended to it promises of corporeal blessings—a land flowing with milk and honey—a land of olives and vineyards—a multitude of children, and such like. But the New promises eternal life and the kingdom of heaven." This was Theodoret's notion of the difference between the Covenant of Law working death, and the Covenant of grace bringing life. It is evident that he had utterly failed in apprehending all that the Apostle had written in the Galatians respecting Hagar and Sarah—Sinai and Zion. Nor is it true that the First Covenant had appended to it earthly promises *only*, or that the New Covenant, when Israel are brought under it, will be unattended by earthly blessings. If any *could have* kept the Law *perfectly* it would have brought to them eternal life. The words of Scripture are express: "the man that hath done them (viz., the things written in the Law) SHALL LIVE by them." [ὁ ποιησας αυτα ανθρωπος ζησεται εν αυτοις. Deut. xxi. 23, as quoted in Gal. iii. 12.] And again, Jesus said,

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The power of Christianity is gone when the difference between the first and second Covenant is not apprehended. When Moses came down from Sinai, what was he commissioned to present to Israel? Tables on which were written the requirements of God's holiness. Israel gazed on them; but did they find in them sal-

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"This do, and thou shalt LIVE." It is utterly untrue, therefore, that eternal life was not *proposed* under the Law. God never designed under any Covenant to give earthly blessings *only*. Accordingly, when Israel shall at last have the veil taken from their heart, and when they shall be brought under the New Covenant and "be blessed in basket and in store; blessed in their going out and coming in," they shall likewise have fulness of spiritual blessing (even as we now have) in heavenly places in Christ risen: and shall look onward to the time when they shall join their brethren, "the Church of the first-born ones" in new heavens and a new earth, where all will be in the perfect likeness of the Second Man, the Last Adam.

Theodoret, therefore, is doubly in error. The distinction that he supposes to exist between the two Covenants does *not* exist: and the vital distinction that does exist, he apprehends not. For the distinction is this. The first Covenant, whilst it proposed eternal life as the *end*, left it to man to provide the means, which he could not: whereas, under the New Covenant, God undertakes to provide both means and end. He *gives* remission of sins and newness of heart. He preserves in Christ Jesus as well as calls. "Whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified." All is of God. He becomes the Alpha and Omega of salvation.

Yet Theodoret, though we cannot say that his views of gospel truth were either full or clear, had not learned with modern Christendom to deify and worship *bread*; nor to pretend that any sacrifice save the one sacrifice once offered on the Cross, is needed for the everlasting remission of sin. "One and the same Person" [i.e. Jesus] says Theodoret, "is both Priest and Victim, and hath

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vation or life? No. They found destruction. "The letter [that is the written precept—το γραμμα] kills," for that which was there written embodied the claims of the Divine holiness, and those claims they could not meet, and therefore there remained for them curse and death. But when the Apostles as ministers of the

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accomplished the expiation of sins, and needs no other ministration, (λειτουργιας) but sits with the Father who begat Him, expecting, &c." Then quoting the words, "Now where remission of these is there is no more offering for sin," he adds: "for this," i.e. continuation of sacrifice, "is superfluous after remission has been granted." *Theodoret on Heb. x.* In speaking of the Supper of the Lord, he says, "To those who are instructed in Divine things, it is manifest that we offer not another sacrifice, but celebrate the memorial of that sacrifice which is one and saving. For our Master Himself enjoined this unto us, 'Do this in remembrance of me,' in order that by contemplation we might call to remembrance the character of the sufferings incurred for our sake, and kindle the flame of love around our benefactor, and await the enjoyment of the good things that are to come." *Theodoret on Heb. viii.*

Modern statements on this subject contrast very unfavourably with these words of Theodoret. Take, for example, the words recently adopted by the Pan-Anglican Synod—"Seek in faith for oneness with Christ in the blessed Sacrament of His body and blood"—strange words, surely, from those who should have denounced as damnable and soul-destroying the doctrine of Transubstantiation and its attendant idolatry, and the doctrine of a sacrificing Priesthood sacrificing atoningly for the living and the dead. Besides, how can believers be taught "to seek for" that which they already have. Believers, from the first moment they believe, *have* union with Christ; and they neither seek it nor attain it in the Sacrament. Such words as the foregoing could not be used by any who really apprehend what the Scripture teaches respecting "the Supper of the Lord." The broken bread and the wine symbolise His body *broken* and His blood *shed.*

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New Covenant come forth to us from God, what are they commissioned to present to us? They present Christ—Christ crucified—Christ as the one finished sacrifice. They bid us look to One who has accomplished a work that brings everlasting forgiveness of sins to all who believe: One also in whom quickening

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The symbolic bread and wine do not direct our souls to any relation of His glorified resurrection body unto us, nor to any virtue thence communicated. They refer not to Christ in His present life, but to Christ in His past death. They refer, as did the Paschal Lamb "roast with fire," to Christ *as the Sacrifice*—that which He was once, and only once. "In that He died, He died unto sin once." The Father "hath reconciled you [believers] *in the body of Christ's flesh through death* [not Christ's resurrection glorified body] to present you holy, &c., in His sight." Colos. i. 22. On the past sacrificial death of Christ, not on His present life, our justification rests. The Lord's Supper is intended to guard the great doctrine of our justification. It brings before us the remembrance of that broken body and shed blood, whereby we are enabled to say that our sins and iniquities are remembered no more. It teaches us that SACRIFICE (the one sacrifice of Calvary) SAVETH. Immanuel by His obedience unto death *satisfied*, once and for ever all the claims of God's governmental holiness. He bore in the stead of His people every appointed penalty, He presented in their stead His own perfect obedience unto God. We feed on Him as the *slain* Lamb.

There is, in the Lord's Supper, no presence in any sense whatsoever of His body once broken, or of His blood once shed. The memorial of it is before us, but it is a memorial only. If the symbols before us cause our souls to look back to and to rest on His atoning work, the observance of the Lord's Supper is blessed to us: but if our souls are not carried back to His *death*, but diverted unto some imaginative and false notion respecting virtue communicated from His glorified body, or any other kindred figment, the Lord's Supper becomes to us a snare, and we turn our blessings into a curse.

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power of life is, so that all who look to Him in faith receive new and heavenly life and have, created in them "the new man," whereby the Law becomes written in their hearts. Thus both the promises of the New Covenant are fulfilled—"their sins and iniquities I will remember no more:" and "I will write my law upon their hearts"—there to remain for ever. God makes Himself our God: He makes us His people. "I WILL BE their God: they SHALL BE my people." All is the result of His own efficacious power whereby He justifies and quickens, preserves and glorifies; that so we might ever say, "OF him, and THROUGH him, and UNTO him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall by the sword be eaten.] Israel has rejected, and continues to refuse, and rebel. They will once more (and that probably very soon) return, whilst yet in unbelief, to their own land. Assyria re-strengthened and re-civilized, will be on one side of them: Egypt on the other. For a season they will flourish in seeming prosperity: but Assyria under a more terrible head than Sennacherib or Nebuchadnezzar, will again be their scourge, and "trample them down as the mire of the streets," until the hour shall come for Jehovah to arise unto judgment and to smite both the oppressed and the oppressor, sparing, however, in Israel, a remnant who shall be made "a strong nation."

There are three great periods of Jerusalem's iniquity described in Scripture: the first is that during which

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Isaiah and the first Prophets testified. This period ended with the captivity of Babylon. The second period was that in which the later Prophets, JESUS, and the Apostles testified. It ended with the captivity and destruction of Jerusalem by Rome. The third and yet future period is that in which Israel, unrepentant and unbelieving, shall re-gather themselves to their land, there to give themselves over to, and ultimately to become the prey of, ANTICHRIST. This last period whilst it will include all the characteristic features of their former iniquities will develop more. "The transgressors will then have come to the full." Former periods are as "the green tree:" this will be as "the dry."

Satan has wonderfully triumphed in deceiving us into the belief that the iniquities of Israel and the judgments thereon as described in the Prophets are a tale of the past: whereas the past is but a foreshadowing, and a faint foreshadowing of that which is to be. And what is more, a large part of Christendom, specially that part of it in which we dwell, will be the great agent in making Jerusalem what it will be, and Assyria what it will be, and Egypt what it will be in the coming day of visitation. The generation in which we live are very distinctly setting themselves against revealed Truth, and are weaving a web that will entangle both Israel and themselves, and drag them into the abyss of Antichristianism. Men are imputing to Truth the responsibility of results that have flowed from their own abuse and prostitution of Truth, and are thus doubly outraging God.

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Verses 21 to 23.

How hath she become a Harlot, the City of faithfulness! Full she was of judgment [justice]: *righteousness dwelt in her, but now murderers. Thy silver is become dross: thy wine ruined by water. Thy princes are rebels and companions of thieves: each one of them is the lover of a bribe and the seeker after recompence: the fatherless they judge not, and the cause of the widow cometh not unto them.*

How hath she become a harlot, &c.] This description, however verified in Israel's past history, will yet again be true of them with heightened features. Ritualistic Christendom has not fallen short of Israel in these things.

Verses 24 to 28.

Therefore saith the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of [literally, comfort myself from] *mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies. And I will cause my hand to return upon thee, and I will purge out thy dross throughly and will take away all thine alloy, and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: after this thou shalt be called,* [literally, it shall be called to thee] *The city of Righteousness, the Fortress of Faithfulness. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness. And the crushing* [breaking] *of transgressors and of sinners shall be together and the forsakers of Jehovah shall come to an end.*

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Ah, I will ease me, &c.] The fulfilment of this is future. He has not yet so turned His hand upon Zion as to purge her from all her alloy, nor has He "restored her judges as at the first, and her counsellors as at the beginning." Transgression must first come to its full in Jerusalem and be "crushed," so that it may never again dominate. This will not be till the great Head of Israel reveals Himself in glory. He will rend the heavens and come down.

The crushing or breaking, &c.] Compare Jer. xix. 11. "Even so will I *break* this people as one *breaketh* a potter's vessel." The word rendered "transgressors"—פְּשָׁעִים denotes rebelliousness, revolt, defection, and is stronger than חַטָּאִים, *sinners*. See Job xxxiv. 37. "He addeth *rebellion* unto his sin." Men may sin against God whilst they still acknowledge Him and His laws: but rebels openly reject Him. "The forsakers of Jehovah," is an expression that denotes apparently complete apostasy. They will avowedly abandon Jehovah for another.

Verse 29.

For they shall be ashamed from [i.e. shame shall come to them from] *the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded from* [confusion shall come to you from] *the gardens ye have chosen. For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf withereth, and as a garden that hath no water. And the strong shall become tow, and his work a spark, and they shall burn both together, and there is no one that quencheth.*

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For they shall be ashamed, &c.] Such is the result of all that modern civilization is about to do in reviving the land of Israel. Strength and beauty may be there —many a mighty oak, and many a lovely garden; but what are strength and beauty apart from God? From the very things that they have desired and delighted in, shame and confusion of face will come. All shall suddenly dry up and wither. Men's works shall be as fire burning against them consumingly; and they themselves shall be as *tow;* ready, meet for the burning. How awful this picture! It is soon to be verified in many a Gentile and many a Jew.

It has been and will be my endeavour to make the translation proposed by me, strictly literal. Such a translation will of course lack the symmetry and beauty of one less exact, especially if an attempt be made to preserve the order of the words of the original. I have consulted the works of many translators, ancient and modern, and have freely availed myself of their suggestions, when they have seemed to me correct. Among these I may mention the work of the late Dr. Alexander, of Princeton, America, edited by Dr. Eadie. This I value most of any critical work on Isaiah that I have seen. Whilst altogether repudiating conjectural emendations of the Hebrew text, I do not defer always to the accentuation nor to the pointing of the printed editions—neither the accentuation nor the pointing being of Divine authority.

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THOUGHTS ON ISAIAH II.

THE Teachers of Israel have been accustomed (and rightly) to divide the history of this Adamic earth into two parts. The first (called by them "this age" עולם הזה, αιων ουτος) is that lengthened and still continuing period of sorrow and evil, which, commencing from the Flood, has already measured nearly six thousand years: the second is that yet future period when the Messiah of Israel shall take to Himself His great power and reign, (Dan. vii. 14. Rev. xi. 15.) and Jerusalem the City of the great King, be made the centre of the Earth for government, instruction, and blessing. This they call, and so does the Apostle, "the age to come," עולם הבא, ὁ μελλων αιων. Heb. vi. 5.*

It would have been well for us if our apprehensions of the earth's present evil, and of the means necessary for its subjugation, had been as true and as vivid as those of the saints in Israel. Feebly have our hearts recognised

* See the use of ἡ γενεα αὐτη in Matt. xxiv. 34. [This generation shall not pass &c.] as contrasted with "the generation to come" in Ps. cii. 18. "This shall be written for the generation to come, and the people that shall be created shall praise the Lord."

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the present dominancy of evil. We discern not the extent of the earth's moral distance from God: we hear not the general groan of creation: and when the Scripture speaks of the wild "forest" (which man looks on as his vineyard) being cut down, and of "Lebanon" (the symbol of the earth's present glory) "falling by a Mighty One," we marvel and ask what these things mean? The night of evil has been so illumined by the lurid fires that men have kindled to relieve its gloom, that even God's people have in great measure failed to apprehend the darkness. They discern distinctly neither the darkness nor the judgment that is to fall thereon, nor the blessedness and joy of the coming Day.

Yet the deliverance of earth from the dominancy of evil and the subsequent reign of the great Melchisedek, are subjects to which exceeding prominency is given both in the Old and in the New Testament. In the earliest of the songs of Israel at the Red Sea, the overthrow of Pharoah and his hosts is regarded as the foreshadowing and the pledge of the final triumph of the Lord over all the Pharoah-like power of earth; and when "the Church of the first-born ones" enter into their glory and stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, that song will again be found on their lips; for the hour of its true accomplishment will *then* have come. They will "sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of nations (ὁ βασιλευς των εθνων). Who shall not fear,

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O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy, (οσιος, חסד) for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments have been made manifest." Rev. xv. The Book of Psalms teems with descriptions of the putting down of the earth's evil before the power of the coming day of glory: and the first recorded Alleluiah of the saints in Heaven is a thanksgiving to Him who "judged the great whore that did corrupt the earth by her fornication, and avenged the blood of His servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever." Rev. xix. 2. Little communion have we at present with thoughts like these. Our apprehension of the character of the workings of Satan and the extent of the constructions of his evil are so feeble, that we recognise not the need for that "roar" of the Lion of Judah that shall cause them all to crumble, and be as though they had not been. That very act of the Lord our God that shall at last call forth the earliest and twice repeated Alleluia of the saints in glory is at present well nigh utterly disregarded. It is neither hoped for nor expected.

Unnumbered examples of God's patient goodness in bestowing blessing are afforded by the world's past history. Again and again, has He opened channels of goodness, and caused to flow therein many a deep stream of mercy. But no sooner does He give, than man's wilfulness and evil interpose, and the mercy given is either perverted or despised. It is needful, therefore, not only that God should give, but that He should

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GOVERN. It is needful that He should watch over and effectually control the diffusion of that which He gives: that He should cut off disturbing agencies, and, under the supervision of His own almighty power, carry out to their proper results His purposes of good. For this faith waits. For this we say, "Thy kingdom come: thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven."

No one apprehended these things more fully than David. He had the heart of a King. He saw that what the earth needed was control—constant, minute control in things little and great; and he knew that such control could only come from Him by whom the earth was created and by whom it is sustained. He knew also that God had appointed that the right government of the world should depend on the right regulation of Israel, and that the right regulation of Israel depended on there being provided for them a Head of whom it could be said in all truthfulness, that He was "righteous; ruling in the fear of God." David had earnestly striven to rule Israel aright. He had longed to bring them into a right relation to God that they might be both blessed and made a blessing. But he had failed. He had failed personally, and he had failed officially: and with his dying lips he confessed his failure. He had not succeeded in regulating aright even his own house—much less Israel—still less the nations. "My house," said he, "is not so with God: yet hath He made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure . . . although He make it not to grow." Certainly, as regards Israel and the

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earth, the covenant has not even yet been made to grow: but David's hopes will not finally be disappointed. There is One belonging to his House, whose coming shall be both to the earth and to Israel "as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away . . . they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place." Such were the dying words of the sweet Psalmist of Israel; and they shall be fulfilled in their season.

In *the closing part* of the chapter before us, we find the description of that coming day of visitation that shall finally overwhelm "the sons of Belial" and all the constructions of their evil. In *the commencement* of the chapter, on the other hand, we have the description of the reign of righteousness and peace that is to follow. We are taught *first* respecting that which is, in fulfilment, *last*. The order of narration inverts the order of accomplishment. It is the method of God's graciousness in teaching His servants whom He loves. He tells them of the happy and blessed end before He instructs them respecting the evil that is to precede, that so they might enter on the path of sorrow fortified and cheered by the sure knowledge of the resulting glory.

Faith, therefore, ever holds fast the words "IT SHALL COME TO PASS IN THE LAST DAYS"—that is to say, in the last period of the history of this Adamic earth, (*before* "the dispensation of the fulness of times"—when new heavens and a new earth shall be created), it shall come

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to pass even in this fallen earth, that the power of evil shall be abased, darkness give place to light, falsehood to Truth, man be made to bow, and Jehovah alone be exalted. "It shall be, in the last days, that the mountain of the house of Jehovah shall be established in the top of the mountains, and be exalted above the hills, and there shall flow unto it all the Gentiles."

The House of Jehovah is the dwelling-place of Truth. There Truth abides; thence Truth emanates. At present Truth has no such dwelling-place *in earth*. It is a pilgrim—a persecuted exile: despised—hated—seeking it may be, a refuge in caves and dens of the earth, and finding perhaps not even that. No mountain of strength devotes its power to its sustainment or protection. Lebanon and Bashan dominate now; and Lebanon and Bashan are not Zion. Zion is forsaken, desolate, abased: and man's unregenerate strength wielded by Gentile hands prevails. But it shall not always be so. The hour of Zion's glory will come at last, when in token of its lasting governmental supremacy it shall be established high above all the other hills and mountains that shall then stand round about (see Ps. cxxv. 2.) Jerusalem, and become the acknowledged governmental centre of the earth. Of old, the glory of God was manifested on Sinai. There once He legislated for Israel under the first Covenant; but in the last days His glory shall rest on Zion, whence He will govern Israel and the earth under the second Covenant. He will there watch over His "House"—the home and dwelling-place of Truth in the earth. He will watch also over His City

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(for Jerusalem shall be the City of the great King) and over His Land which shall be made the joy of all lands —a praise and a blessing in the earth. Zion shall be the gathering place of all nations where they shall seek and receive light, guidance, protection, blessing. "Many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, unto the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." Unity, catholicity, authority, infallibility (not counterfeit but true) shall characterize the new position that Truth shall then hold on Zion. It shall be the place of centralized light and centralized power, whence all nations shall be enlightened, regulated, controlled. It will be this, because it will be the seat of the government of Christ, the King as well as the God of Israel. "The sun shall be confounded and the moon ashamed when Jehovah of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously." Heaven indeed will still be His home. It did not cease to be His home when His glory was of old displayed on Sinai; nor will it cease to be His home when His glory shall, in the latter day, rest on Zion.

What should we think of one who affirmed that he was dwelling in Eden like Adam before he sinned; or that he was seated on the throne of Solomon's glory? Yet are they less deluded who say that they occupy the place of Zion in its glory? If so, where are the tokens? Do we see any glory before which the sun is

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confounded and the moon ashamed? Do we see Israel walking in the light of the Lord? Do we see the nations gathering themselves to Jerusalem that they might there learn the law of Jehovah? Do we see them beating their swords into ploughshares and learning war no more? Do we see Truth and Righteousness established in the earth, and God alone exalted? Not one of these things do we find. Not one of the tokens needful to sustain the preposterous claim can be found. On the contrary, the earth is covered with darkness. Falsehood reigns. Israel is blinded. Immanuel's land is desolate. God is dishonoured: Satan exalted. They who assume to themselves the place of Zion, do, by the very fact of the claim, show that they know nothing of the real nature of the glory that is to come. They can never have estimated the earth's present evil, or apprehended the character of that coming day of visitation by which alone that evil will be removed. Yet to be ignorant of these things, is to be ignorant of well nigh all that God has revealed with the view of causing us to apprehend the darkness of the present, and the light of the future. It is to be feared that an eye that discerns not these things, neither recognises darkness as darkness, nor light as light. Samson, as soon as he lost his Nazarite separation, was blinded. His eyes were put out; his power of service to the Lord ceased; and he was put into the prison-house to grind for the Philistines. Such, or worse, must be the condition of those who despise the separating power of Truth, (all Truth separates,) and refuse to be Nazarites in this day of evil.

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Almost in its earliest days, Gentile Christianity, becoming wise in its own conceit, began to boast itself against Israel; nevertheless, while the Apostles continued to minister, the evil was checked and the consequences averted. But as soon as the Apostles died, the Churches lapsed. They lost their separation, sank into union with the world, and were no longer counted worthy to be represented by that honoured symbol, "candlesticks of gold," by which their early condition was denoted—while as yet they truly shone as lamps of the sanctuary in the midst of the world's darkness. The being disowned by God as lamps of His sanctuary, was the first great crisis in the history of the Gentile Churches; yet Gentile Christianity at that moment of its punishment and degradation, instead of humbling itself, exalted itself the more, and shamelessly claimed for itself the authority and the glory reserved for Zion and Jerusalem in "the last days." One might have supposed that the words with which the chapter before us opens, are so unquestionably declarative of blessings reserved for *Zion and Jerusalem*, as to be proof against evasion or perversion; yet even in these verses one of the early Fathers, Cyril, discovers a prophecy not of Israel's blessing, but of the taking away of God's Word from them!!* So soon did the light of professing

* I say this on the authority of Vitringa, who says: "Plane repudiamus illum ingenii lusum, qui occurrit inter alias meditationes apud Cyrillum, acsi dicere vellet Vates, *Gentes* fidem Verbi Evangelii suscepisse, quia *Verbum Dei egressum est ex Tsione*, hoc est egrediendo ex Tsione καταλελοιπε την Σιων. Alienissi-

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Christianity begin to be turned into darkness. "If the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness."

Constantine and his flatterers, of course welcomed the thought of being exalted into the place of Zion, and so did Papal Rome. The Catechism of Pope Pius IV. would not have even the semblance of support from Scripture, apart from its perversion of millennial texts. Throughout it, the promises made to Jerusalem in the day of her future glory are shamelessly appropriated to Rome. Nor has Protestantism escaped the snare. Its various sections have been fond of claiming for themselves the standing of Jerusalem, and of dignifying the centres around which they respectively gather, by the name of Zion. Although the unity, and light, and holiness, and power, and glory, that are to characterize Zion are all wanting, and although all the results that are to follow Zion's exaltation are absent—although nations instead of learning war no more, bristle with arms; and instead of bowing before the Truth of God, rebel more and more against it—notwithstanding all this, the delusion is pertinaciously persisted in, and the falsified songs of the future hour of Zion's glory are sung in the day when both Zion and the Truth are in degradation and reproach.

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mum id est a scopo, et illi recte contrarium." Vitringa does not say whether he refers to Cyril of Jerusalem or to Cyril of Alexandria, nor does he give any reference. I have examined with the help of an index the passages where it might be supposed that the statement would occur, but I have not been able to find it.

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It is no excuse for this to say, that the Truth made known to believers now is the same Truth that will by and by be established on Zion, and that in that sense we have *anticipatively* the blessings of the age to come. It is no doubt true that believers (who be it remembered are but a "little flock") have the *spiritual* blessings of the millennium, and in this sense the millennium is forestalled. The millennial saints and ourselves have one God, one Father, one Saviour, one Sacrifice, one Spirit, one hope. That which saves from the flesh and its ruin now, will save from the flesh and its ruin when the millennium comes. Christ is the one Head under whom, and in whom all the redeemed of every dispensation will *finally* be united together in the new heavens and new earth, there constituting one glorified body—the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. There are not two gospels, or two ways, or two ends of salvation. But are we because of similarities to forget contrasts? In the coming age, the *external* circumstances of God's people will be in harmony with their spiritual condition. All will be blessing. But *now* it is direfully otherwise. Creation groans. Israel is blinded. Satan, as the god of this age, controls the social and governmental arrangements of the world. Truth and its servants are despised. Christendom, the professed witness of Truth, is corrupt. The true servants of God are few, feeble, and divided. Antichrist is about to be revealed; and the Lord Jesus, because rejected by the earth, is seated on the throne of the Father, waiting till His enemies be set as a footstool

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for His feet. In a word, it is now the day of man, and the day of the Lord has not yet come. Is there no difference between the position occupied by Truth and its servants now, and that which will be occupied when the day of the Lord shall have come?

If we apprehend not the character of the future day of righteousness and peace, we shall equally fail in apprehending the character of the present evil and the judgment which is about to fall thereon. He who rejects the testimony of the first part of this chapter as to the coming blessing, will equally reject its closing testimony as to the coming hour of visitation. Blindness as to these two things must involve blindness, more or less, as to every path of service, and every branch of Truth. We shall look with complacency upon the oaks of Bashan, and the high towers and fenced walls, and on all that wherewith man in the day of his pride hath overspread the earth, and rest and rejoice in the very things which are bringing on the great day of visitation. We shall mistake the hour of the triumph of Satan for the day when the Lord alone shall be exalted. How then can we understand the Scripture? Must it not become a sealed book to us? Must we not cease to have communion with the thoughts of God?

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NOTES ON ISAIAH II.

Verse 1.

The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.] The two succeeding chapters, as well as the second, are prefaced by this verse. It might seem quite superfluous to say that Judah and Jerusalem mean Judah and Jerusalem; yet if that had been remembered, Rome would never have been able to deceive as she has done by appropriating this, and like texts, to herself. She has wished to be *supreme* in the earth. She has said, "Kings shall be *my* nursing fathers and their queens *my* nursing mothers: they shall bow down with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of *my* feet."

Nothing but a clear apprehension of the difference between the present and the next dispensation, can enable us rightly to estimate this claim. They who believe that secular power is so essentially distinct from ecclesiastical that there never can be a union of both in the same person, will regard the attempt of the Church of Rome to unite them as an act of folly to be despised and ridiculed, rather than to be seriously resisted. Whereas, others who believe that it would be a right and happy thing for the same hand that controls the

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worship and order of the Church to regulate also the order of civil and social life—who see that Truth ought to be *supreme*, and that the Scripture speaks of a time when Zion and its Priest-king shall govern all nations, are always predisposed (unless they understand the character of the millennial age) to acquiesce, either partially or altogether, in the rightness of the course which Rome has followed. The first are in danger of becoming Infidels—the last superstitious Romanists.

The system of the Church of Rome is skilfully constructed on a millennial model. Claiming to be the Mother and Mistress of all Churches, its earthly Head sits as a crowned priest upon his throne. He is saluted as God. Rome, because the place of his Throne, is the centre of all authority in the earth. He is surrounded by priests brought into nearer relation to God and to himself than the congregation who stand before him and receive his blessing. His sentence is infallible and irreversible. He has divine authority to alter laws and to forgive sins. He deposes and raises up kings and governs kingdoms, and the like. The claim put forward by the High-priest of Rome to the possession of this power is of course blasphemous; but the authority thus falsely claimed is an authority which the earth really needs, and which will in due time be exercised by Jesus, the Son of the living God. For He who is now sitting (because rejected by Israel) upon His Father's throne, will soon sit *also* upon His own throne, even the throne of His father David. He will be saluted as God—"thy throne, O God, is for ever and

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ever." Jerusalem, because the place of His *earthly* throne, will be the centre of all authority in the earth. He will be surrounded by priests, even His risen saints, brought by resurrection into nearer* relation to God and to Himself than the congregation of Israel who stand before Him as His earthly people to receive His blessing. His sentence will be infallible. He will have divine authority to alter laws and to forgive sins. He will control and raise up kings and govern kingdoms. His throne will be a centre of unity to the whole earth. Satan well knows that these things are in the Scripture: he knows that they are demanded by the need of man, and therefore when raising up a lamp of his own into the place of the lamp of God, he wisely sets it in a position that *seems* to command the testimony of Scripture on its behalf. I say he has *wisely* done this, for he knows the ignorance that prevails as to the Word of God: he knows the carelessness with which Scripture is read: he knows that if the absence of all moral, and spiritual, and outward tokens that mark the true Candlestick of God be undiscerned or unheeded, false applications of Scripture will be sure to pass undetected. The tendency of the human heart to welcome anything whereby it is exalted, facilitates the delusion. The result of this misapplication of Scripture is the destruction of well-nigh every practical principle that God desires to be exhibited in His Church. Until the hour when Christ

* This distinction between the millennial saints on earth and the risen saints will not be perpetual. In the new heavens and the new earth all the redeemed will form one glorified body.

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shall take His seat upon His own throne, the moral glory of the Church entirely depends on its being found in the path of suffering, affliction, and patience. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is intended to show the universal character of the family of faith from Abel until the day of millennial blessing shall commence. They were all strangers and sojourners—sufferers, "of whom the world was not worthy." But the perverted use of millennial Scripture tends to change the sufferer into a king, causes us to reign before the time, and seeks to give to the Bride, the Lamb's wife, the place which, by God's appointment, is at present occupied by that ten-horned Beast whose body is to be given to the burning flame as soon as "the sovereignty of the world becomes the sovereignty of our Lord and of His Christ." The path of Protestantism would not have been what it has been, if it had duly recognised, that, in the present dispensation, the secular greatness of earth is as antagonistic to Truth as the ecclesiastical. Herod and Pilate are not nearer Christ than Caiaphas.

Indeed the secular power is to lead in that last great Apostasy that is to enthrone itself on Zion. Antichrist as the great Monarch of ἡ οικουμενη—the whole Roman World, will glorify himself there. See Dan. xi. 45. If therefore we should see the hearts of men gradually withdraw their allegiance from ancient ecclesiasticism, and transfer it to a new system which latitudinarian Judaism and Gentilism will cherish and plant in Jerusalem, we need not marvel. It is a preparation for the end. Latitudinarianism may prate for a

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season about Zion as the mountain of God, and like Rome may seek to cloke its deceivableness under holy words. But the veil will soon be cast aside. God and His Scripture will be renounced, and the open Blasphemer of God (there will no longer be the pretence of vice-regency) will sit on Zion "showing himself that he is God." However awful, therefore, it may be to hear the words of Isaiah appropriated by Rome, it will yet be more awful to hear them applied to a system, which with fair pretensions as to philanthropy, human brotherhood and the like, is to culminate in Antichrist.

Verses 2 to 5.

"*And it shall be, in the end of the days, that the Mountain of the House of Jehovah shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and there shall flow unto it all the Gentiles: and many peoples shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the Mountain of Jehovah, to the House of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the Law and the Word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O House of Jacob, come ye and let us walk in the light of Jehovah.*"

And it shall be in the end of the days.] I have already observed that the Jews are accustomed to divide the history of the Adamic earth into two periods,

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"*this age*" (עולם הזה, *αιων ουτος*), and "the age to come." (עולם הבא, *ὁ μελλων αιων*). The Scripture fully sanctions this distinction, and frequently contrasts the two periods. Thus the Apostle in the Hebrews speaks of "the age to come" *ὁ μελλων αιων*, Heb. vi. 5: and of *ἡ οικουμενη ἡ μελλουσα*—"the habitable earth to come," Heb. ii. 5, into which God will again bring the first-begotten from the dead, saying "Let all the angels of God worship him." Heb. i. 6. This coming period, seeing that it is the last in the history of this Adamic earth is called by the Apostle "the last time" ["who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time"—*εν εσχατῳ καιρῳ* 1 Pet. i. 5]. See also the expression several times used by our Lord in John vi. when speaking of the resurrection of His saints—"I will raise him up in the last day"—*εν τῃ εσχατῃ ἡμερᾳ*. The expression used in the passage before us—"end of the days" (rendered by the Sept. "in the last days," *εν ταις εσχαταις ἡμεραις*) is equivalent in meaning to those just quoted from Peter and from John. It is very frequently used in the Old Testament to denote the millennial period, or as the Jews would express it, "the days of the Messiah," because those days will conclude the history of this *Adamic* earth.*

* See for example the following passages:

Numbers xxiv. 14. "Come and I will advertise thee what this people (Israel) shall do to thy people (Moab) in the end of the days."

Jer. xxiii. 20. "The anger of the Lord shall not return, until

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The mountain of the house of Jehovah.] An appellation of Zion, either because the Temple stood thereon (Moriah being regarded as a part of Zion) or else because it is the place where the glory of God will be made manifest (as for a season it was on Sinai,) to watch over that House and its interests. How little the solemn

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he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: *in the end of the days* ye shall consider it perfectly."

Jer. xlviii. 47. "Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab *in the end of the days*, saith the Lord."

Ez. xxxviii. 16. "And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be *in the end of the days* &c."

Hosea iii. 5. "Afterward shall the children of Israel return . . . . . and shall fear the Lord and his goodness *in the end of the days*."

Micah iv. 1. "But it shall be *in the end of the days* that the mountain of the house of Jehovah shall be established &c."

This expression, "end of the days" is not to be confounded with another, "last of THESE days," viz., επ' εσχατου των ημερων τουτων, used by the Apostle in Heb. i. 2. The term of the existence of this Adamic earth being divided into two periods, ("*these days*," and "*the days to come*") Christ appeared in the last part of these days—επ' εσχατου των ημερων τουτων—or as it is expressed in Heb. ix. 26—"at the conclusion of the ages"—our dispensation being the last granted to man during *his* day. So also in 1 Cor. x. 11, the Apostle speaks of them as those on whom "the ends of the ages have come."

But again, our present dispensation which is the last of those that precede the millennium has also itself a conclusion. The Apostle speaks of *ITS* last days when he says, "This know that in the *last days* perilous times shall come." 2 Tim. iii. 1. Our Lord also frequently uses the expression, "end of the age," to denote the conclusion of the present dispensation. See Matt. xiii. 40, and xxviii. 20. The context, therefore, will in each case determine how "last," or "end," is to be interpreted.

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investiture of Christ with the sovereignty of earth as taught in Dan. vii. 13, and the subsequent manifestation of His glory on Zion [" yet have I inaugurated my King on Zion, the mountain of my holiness "] are apprehended by God's people! Awful blindness has fallen even on the true Church touching these things.

Shall be established in the top of the mountains, and be exalted above [or away from] *the hills.*] This exaltation of Zion like the cleaving asunder of the Mount of Olives (see Zech. xiv.) will be one of the results of Jehovah arising to shake terribly the earth. Zion will be raised high above all the other mountains that will begirt (see Ps. cxxv. 2,) Jerusalem and thus the light of the glory of the Lord, even as from an exalted beacon, shall be made manifest afar off. This physical exaltation of Zion will be one of those symbolic facts with which the millennium abounds. (See Occasional Papers No. IV. Vol. 2, p. 245.) It will indicate the established supremacy of the Divine government over all the subordinate authorities of earth. Then "the mountains [i. e. the greater authorities of earth] and the little hills [the lesser authorities] shall bring peace to the peoples by means of righteousness." They shall be ministers of righteousness, and the fruit of righteousness shall be peace.

He shall rebuke many peoples.] The word translated "rebuke" (יכח Hiph.) is sometimes used of correction by *words*, as we read of Abraham reproving Abimelech, Gen. xxi. 25: sometimes of the rebuke of chastisement as in 2 Sam. vii. 14: or of wrath as in Habakkuk i. 12.

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When the Lord shall assume His millennial power, His dealings with the various nations will vary according to their respective conditions. Some will be chastened: others smitten unto destruction. "The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee [Israel] shall perish, yea, those kingdoms shall be utterly wasted."

They shall beat their swords into ploughshares &c.] Contrast this verse with that of Joel iii., where the reverse command is given—"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye Gentiles (גוים), and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord." Joel iii. 9—11. So *this* dispensation is to end. It is one in which nation shall continue to rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom (see Matt. xxiv. 7) until the hour comes for that awful summons to be given which I have just transcribed from Joel. The gathering to Armageddon, and thence to the valley of Jehoshaphat, must first be, before any part of the blessed and peaceful scene predicted in Isaiah can be fulfilled. The time is not yet come for nations to "learn war no more."

O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.] The voice of prophecy often transfers itself into the distant future, and speaks as if *from the midst of* the circumstances contemplated or described. So is it here. The Prophet stands as in the midst of

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the coming scene of blessing, and thence exhorts his people.

Verses 6 to 9.

"But Thou hast forsaken Thy people, the House of Jacob, because they are replenished from the East, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and in the children of strangers they abound. Filled also is his (Israel's) Land with silver and gold, and there is no end to his treasures; filled also is his Land with idols—to the work of their hands they bow down, to that which their fingers have made. And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself, therefore regard them not."

But thou hast forsaken Thy people, the house of Jacob.] Here the scene changes. It is no longer the house of Jacob called to walk in the light of the Lord, but the house of Jacob abandoned and given up to judgment because of their abominations. [The particle כִּי may be often translated "*but,*" when a negative sentence expressed or understood precedes. Here, as frequently, there is an ellipsis before כִּי. *It is otherwise now,* for (כִּי) thou hast forsaken thy people &c. In such a case כִּי may most suitably be translated "but." See Gesenius on כִּי section 6.]

For they be replenished from the east.] Filled, that is, with all that Chaldea and Babylon can supply them with. From Isaiah's time to the present, there has been no period in Israel's history to which this wonderful description of wealth, strength, and prosperity, *combined*

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with idolatry and abomination, is applicable. It belongs to that coming, and perhaps nearly approaching hour, when Israel, surrounded by all that they have gathered to themselves of the riches of earth during the days of their dispersion, shall return with hardened and impenitent hearts to the land whence they have been driven, there to flourish for a season, but to flourish that they may be cut down. Judgment upon judgment will fall upon their evil greatness until the great day of visitation shall come, and sweep it away for ever. Chaldea also and Babylon (as we shall see subsequently) will like Israel revive. Israel will be closely bound up with that Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth, and thence will replenish themselves with evil splendour, wealth, refinement, luxury, harlotry and abomination. Antichristianism will find its ecclesiastical home (so to speak) in Jerusalem—its secular in Babylon.

Soothsayers, like the Philistines.] Ancient wickedness will be combined with modern abominations. Israel of old imitated Philistia in worshipping and serving demons, and so will it be again. Men now think it wisdom to scoff at the notion of demoniacal agency even at the very moment when, through mesmerism and spiritualism, multitudes are giving themselves over, body and soul, to the control of unclean spirits. Few believe that St. Paul really cast out "the spirit of Pytho" from the damsel who divined at Philippi. Yet it was so. "And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel that had the spirit of Pytho [or follow-

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ing the corrected reading—*having the spirit Pytho,* εχουσαν πνευμα πυθωνα] met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying [or divining, μαντευομενη]. The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul being grieved, turned and said to her by the Spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he [i. e. the spirit Pytho] came out the same hour." See Acts xvi. 16—18. The occurrence of the word "Pytho" in this passage is most important: by the use of that word the Holy Spirit signifies that the Pythian or Delphic oracle, which for so many ages maintained its ascendancy over the statesmen, and orators, and philosophers of Greece and Rome, was not a mere invention of human subtilty, but was the result of real Satanic agency. Men may imagine that they are guides to themselves. But it is not really so. If they refuse the guidance of God and of His Spirit, they fall under the guidance of Satan and evil spirits, even though they know it not. The ancient Pagan world, through the influence of the Pythian oracle and like agencies, was thoroughly under the mastership of Satan, and thousands now are rushing back by "spiritualism" and "necromancy" into the same awful servitude. Spirits are consulted, and return, as of old, oracular replies. *Evil spirits personating the dead* return soft answers to the enquiries of their deluded victims, and lead them on, soothed and comforted by lies, unto

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that lake of fire where their own final portion is to be.

The forms under which Satan cloaks his agency are various. In Deut. xviii. 9—14, they are thus enumerated. "When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee. Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God. For these nations which thou shalt possess hearkened unto observers of times and unto diviners, but as for thee the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do." See also Lev. xx. 27. "A man also, or a woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them."

God would not have spoken thus if these things were merely the results of human deceptiveness. Saul evidently sought the witch of Endor as knowing her to be possessed of supernatural power: and the passage that I have quoted from the Acts proves that the damsel at Philippi was really possessed by an unclean spirit, and thereby divined. In Gal. v. 20, "witch-

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craft" [φαρμακεια] is numbered among the works of which it is said, that they who do them shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

At the close of their evil history, Israel, like Saul, finding themselves abandoned by God, shall give themselves over "to wizards that peep and mutter" [see Is. viii.]; and instead of consulting the living God shall consult, or seek to consult, the dead. But the end will be anguish and darkness. "They shall look unto the earth, and behold trouble and darkness—dimness of anguish." Is. viii. 22.

[It is quite impossible to define with precision the various appellations that occur in these verses, Deut. xviii. 9—14, or to determine the exact distinction between them: nor is it needful, for their general bearing is obvious. They may, however, be translated a little more carefully than they have been in our version. They may be rendered thus: "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter pass through the fire,*—one that useth divination, an observer, or an augur, or a sorcerer: or a user of incantations, or a consulter of Ohv, or a wizard, or an inquirer of the dead."

Of these descriptions I regard the second, viz., "*one*

* "This is not the consuming of their children to Moloch, but by way of lustration, a mock baptism, a piece of witchcraft, to preserve from violent death."—*Gilpin's Demonologia Sacra*, p. 28.

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that divineth divinations," קסם קסמים, as the most comprehensive. I consider it to be a generic term, including under it the various specific forms of divination subsequently mentioned. Thus this word is applied to Balaam [see Josh. xiii. 22] who divined *by omens* נחשים [see Num. xxiv. 1], and also to the witch of Endor who divined *not* by omens, but *by Ohv*—the name in Hebrew of the unclean spirit by whom she divined, just as the damsel in the Acts is said to have divined by the spirit Pytho. These two examples show that the word קסם is applied to very different kinds of divination, and prove its generic use.

It is not easy to determine the specific meaning of מעונן, which is the word used by Isaiah in the chapter before us, and is in our version rendered "*soothsayer,*" but in Deut. xviii. is translated "*observer of times,*" a rendering frequently given by our translators. "Soothsayer," which means "a sayer of [pretended] truth," is not a suitable rendering, for the etymology of מעונן, and its contextual association in Scripture, indicate *observation.* There is, however, nothing in the word that indicates observation *of times* any more than the observation of other things. It seems rather to denote such observation as requires the careful use of the eye in minute inspection, such as was used by the *haruspices,* whose peculiar office was to inspect the entrails of victims, and in this differed from *the augurs* who judged from the flight and voices of birds, and other palpable signs, using the ear no less than the eye. I have little doubt that this word refers to that part of the science

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of divination in which the eye was employed in minute inspection, especially of the entrails of victims. The Jerusalem Targum renders this word, *to inspect serpents.*

"Enchanter," which is the word used by our translators in this passage in Deuteronomy, as the rendering of מְנַחֵשׁ, is certainly not an accurate translation. The word implies quick and intelligent observation, such as is ascribed to the serpent (נָחָשׁ), and is twice used in a good sense, namely, in Gen. xxx. 27, where Laban says, "*I have learned by experience or observation that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake,*" and in 1 Kings xx. 33, where it is translated *diligently observe.* "Now the men did *diligently observe.*" It seems to denote that kind of quick observation which notes signs and tokens, whether presented to the eye or to the ear. This was especially the province of the augur. In Gen. xliv. 5, and the connected verse, it is translated by the generic word "divine." "Wot ye not that such a man as I could certainly divine."

The word translated "wizard" (מְכַשֵּׁף) means properly "one that uses sorceries"—lxx. *φαρμακευεσθαι.** Vulg. *maleficis artibus inservire.* In Exodus vii. 11, it is translated *sorcerers.* "Then Pharoah called the wise men and *the sorcerers.* Now the magicians of Egypt they also did in like manner with their enchantments." The application of the word to the sorcerers summoned by Pharoah sufficiently defines its meaning, and proves

* For some valuable observations on the use of this word see *Gilpin's Demonologia*, p. 27.

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that the power possessed by these persons was real and Satanic.

The eleventh verse of Deut. xviii. is, to a certain degree, contrasted with that which precedes. The tenth verse which we have been considering, treats of those kinds of divination in which demons are not immediately addressed, but consulted *mediately*, by the intervention of signs, or when effects are sought to be produced by the instrumental use of medicaments, enchantments &c. But in the eleventh verse words are used which imply a more direct appeal to evil spirits. Thus the first word חבר (which properly means to bind or join together, hence used of fellowship and alliance, see 2 Chron. xx. 36, Ps. xciv. 20) denotes a charmer who seeks by incantations and invocations to bring the being or beings addressed into association with himself. For this purpose incantations, *επαοιδαι*, were addressed to demons; and this I understand to be the meaning here. The Chever, or charmer, was one who addressed incantations to evil spirits in order to secure their aid and co-operation.

So likewise in the next description—"*one that enquireth of Ohv*," where the direct appeal to an unclean spirit is plainly indicated. Ohv (אוֹב) is in our version commonly rendered "*familiar spirit.*" That it is a generic name, used of such evil spirits as dwelt in persons who practised divination, is evident from Leviticus xx. 27—"a man also, or a woman that hath an *Ohv*" (literally, when an *Ohv* shall be in them), "shall surely be put to death." In this passage, the actual presence

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and indwelling of an unclean spirit in men and women is recognised as distinctly as it is in Acts, when St. Paul cast out the spirit Pytho from the damsel in Philippi. In *some* of the subjoined passages it will be seen that *Ohv* is used in the plural *Ohvoth*. In such cases it appears to denote the persons in whom the demons dwelt rather than the demons themselves. In the two cases historically referred to in Scripture, namely, that of the witch of Endor, and of the damsel at Philippi, women were the instruments. The Pythoness at Delphi was the great *medium* in the Pagan world.

The word *Ohv* means properly an inflated bladder, or skin, and is applied to these unclean spirits, because they caused the bodies of those in whom they dwelt to swell and become tumid like skins filled with new wine. See remarks of Parkhurst on this in his Hebrew Lexicon, and the description given in Virgil of the Pythoness when inspired. Gesenius says, "Ohv denotes a Python or soothsaying demon, of which these men were supposed to be [and really were] possessed." See Lev. xx. 27, "a man or a woman when a Python (Ohv) is in them."

The following are the passages in which this word occurs :—

Lev. xix. 31. "Look not unto the Ohvoth,"—plural of Ohv.

Lev. xx. 6. "And the soul that turneth after the Ohvoth, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people."

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Lev. xx. 27. "A man also or a woman when an Ohv shall be in them, or one who is a wizard shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them."

Deut. xviii. 11. "One that enquireth of an Ohv."

1 Sam. xxviii. 3. "Saul had put away the Ohvoth, and the wizards out of the land."

1 Sam. xxviii. 7. "Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that is possessed of [literally *that is mistress of*] an Ohv . . . . . and his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that is mistress of an Ohv at Endor."

1 Sam. xxviii. 8. "And he [Saul] said, Use divination, I pray thee, by means of the Ohv, and bring me him up whom I shall name to thee."

1 Sam. xxviii. 9. "Thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off the Ohvoth, and the wizards out of the land."

1 Chron. x. 13. "So Saul died for his transgression . . . . and also for consulting the Ohv to enquire of it."

2 Kings xxi. 6. "And he [Manasseh] dealt with an Ohv and with wizards." Also 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6.

2 Kings xxiii. 24. "Moreover the Ohvoth and the wizards . . . . . did he [Josiah] put away."

Isaiah viii. 19. "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto the Ohvoth and unto wizards."

Isaiah xix. 3. "And they shall seek . . . . . unto the Ohvoth and the wizards."

Isaiah xxix. 4. "And thy voice like that of an Ohv out of the ground."

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These are all the passages in which this word occurs, with the exception of one, where it is used to signify wine-skins, or bottles. "My belly is as wine, which hath no vent: it is ready to burst as new bottles." This illustrates its meaning as applied to those possessed of Ohv.

The application of these awful texts, in their full force, to the spiritualists and necromancers of the present day, will not be questioned by those who believe God's Holy Word, and who have considered in its light the facts of spiritualism. The history of Paganism might have sufficiently taught men what a terrible servitude, servitude to evil spirits is, and how easily, when God permits it, we may be brought into connection with, and subjection to, the unseen evil spiritual world. But human society at present refuses alike the lessons of experience and the warnings of the Word of God, and is blindly rushing on into the positions which Satan intends that his servants should occupy in the last great conflict between Falsehood and Truth. Men are deliberately rejecting the guidance of God and of His Word, and are inviting the help of Satan. It is not wonderful that God should give them up to "strong delusion."]

In the children of strangers they abound.] When the Jews, with all their wealth, intelligence, and commercial activity, shall return (as probably they soon will) in unbelief to their own land, its very position will necessarily make it a highway of nations. See it thus

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recognised in Rev. xi. 9, where (in a passage yet unfulfilled) Jerusalem is described as a gathering place of "peoples, kindreds, tongues, and nations." It will be full of strangers, riches, horses, chariots, and also of idols—for where God is not, there idols will be. Twice already has a prosperity, bearing some (though a remote) resemblance to this, been seen in the land of Israel; and twice has it been smitten: first by Assyria, secondly by Rome. A third time it will be allowed to re-appear, and a third time will it be smitten. Plagues and judgments, the like to which never yet have been, will first be poured upon Israel, and on the nations associated with them in their evil [see the central part of the Revelation] and then will come the great day of visitation—the day of the Lord, as described in the concluding part of this chapter, when the King of kings, and Lord of lords, shall come forth to destroy, not indeed the earth, but "them that destroy the earth." See Rev. xi. 18.

Verses 10 to 22.

Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust from before the terror of Jehovah, and from the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man—אָדָם [*literally*, the eyes of the loftiness of man] *are brought down, and the height of mortals* [אֲנָשִׁים, a depreciatory word implying weakness and impotence] *is made low, and exalted is Jehovah alone in that day. For there is a day for Jehovah of Hosts against every thing high and lofty, and against every thing that is lifted up, and it hath come down: and against all*

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the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, and against all the oaks of Bashan: and against all the high mountains, and against all the hills that are lifted up: and against every lofty tower, and against every fenced wall: and against all the ships of Tarshish, and against all images of desire [pleasantness]. *And sunk is the loftiness of man, and bowed down is the pride of mortals, and exalted is Jehovah alone in that day. And the idols—the whole shall pass away. And they* [i.e. men indefinitely] *shall go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the hollows of the ground* [dust עָפָר] *from before the terror of Jehovah, and from the glory of His Majesty, at His arising to strike with terror the earth. In that day shall Man* [הָאָדָם] *cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made for him* [*qu'on lui aura faites*] *to worship, to the moles and to the bats, to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the fissures of the cliffs from before the terror of Jehovah, and from the glory of His Majesty, at His arising to strike with terror the earth. Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?*

A day for Jehovah of Hosts shall be against every thing that is high and lifted up &c.] "Cedars of Lebanon high and lifted up; oaks of Bashan; high mountains; high towers; fenced walls; ships of Tarshish; pleasant images and idols, are emblems that sufficiently indicate the condition of the earth when the hour of its judgment comes. This is the result of what men call "human progress." Men will be allowed to plant for themselves their Eden—their garden of delight, and

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from these verses we may judge of its character. It will bring down on itself the day of wrath and fiery indignation. Yet even Christ's people have forgotten this, and glory in the very things that are to be smitten unto destruction.

Ships of Tarshish.] Tarshish (the ancient Tartessus, a city near Cadiz, at the mouth of the Guadalquiver) is used in Scripture to denote the regions of the *West*, and the *western* course of commerce carried on by the Mediterranean Sea, through the Straits of Gibraltar; just as Ophir denotes the regions of the East, and the eastern course of commerce carried on by the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. See 1 Kings ix. 26, 28. The scheme of Jehoshaphat, when he united himself with Ahaziah, appears to have been to build at Ezion-geber, on the Red Sea, "ships of Tarshish," that is, ships destined for Tarshish [see 1 Kings xxii. 48, and 2 Chron. xx. 36, where they are described "as ships to go to Tarshish"], in order that they might go both to Ophir [see 1 Kings xxii. 48], and also to Tarshish [see 2 Chron. xx. 36], that so Ezion-geber, the chief part of the land of Israel, might gather to itself the commerce of the East and West—Tarshish being reached by coasting round Africa, as was done by the Egyptians. We do not read of ships of Ophir in the latter day, but we do of ships of Tarshish; "thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind,"—words occurring in a Psalm descriptive of the yet future day of Israel's deliverance, when destruction shall fall on their Gentile oppressors. There seems, therefore, no reason to

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doubt that naval pre-eminence will, at the close, be found in the western countries of the Roman world, Spain, France, Britain.

All pleasant images, or images of desire.] This description no doubt includes "pictures," the word adopted in our version, but שְׂכִיוֹת is more extensive, including all figures that human art in any way fashions, whether by painting, sculpture, or otherwise, for the gratification of the eye in its search after beauty. Lowth's translation is, "every lovely work of art:" the Vulgate renders "*every thing beauteous to the sight: omne quod visu pulchrum est:*"—a too wide rendering, for the description is limited to forms framed by art and man's device. The exact form of the word here translated "pictures," occurs only in this place; but its cognate מַשְׂכִּית, also derived from שָׂכָה, *to look at, to behold,* is found in Lev. xxvi. 1, where it is used of sculpture in stones. "Ye shall make no idols, nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any *image of stone*" [אֶבֶן מַשְׂכִּית], literally, *stone of figure,* i. e. stone in any way fashioned to represent the form of any being—not limited, as by Gesenius, to stones adorned with superstitious or magical figures. In Ezek. viii. 12, we find it applied to *painted* figures found in the chambers of imagery—חַדְרֵי מַשְׂכִּית in which the ancients of Israel worshipped—the walls of these chambers being adorned with painted figures of idols [compare verses 10, 11]. In Numbers xxxiii. 52, it is translated "pictures," but as it is opposed in the connected clause to *molten* images, it seems rather to apply to *sculptured*

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figures than to paintings. The Israelites were commanded utterly to destroy all such figures.

At what period of the world's history have the fine arts subserved the interests of the truth as it is in Jesus? They have abundantly subserved the purposes of human pride and glory. How they have been used to beautify and throw a halo around vice and falsehood may be seen from the relation in which they have stood to the mythology of Paganism, and the idolatries of Romanism and Ecclesiasticism. They are so employed now. They will be abundantly used to give beauty and attractiveness to that coming period when the fool shall say in his heart, "There is no God." But what is an adorned world without God?

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THOUGHTS ON ISAIAH III. & IV.

THE conclusion of the preceding chapter describes the coming of the great day of visitation, when the proud greatness of earth, now fast advancing towards the final form of its development, will receive its last great blow, and sink never to rise again. But that last overwhelming stroke is not given until many a precursive judgment has been sent to warn. Long-suffering patience is one of the most marked of the attributes of God, and therefore He permits not destructive judgment to fall without long and oft-repeated warnings. The first verse of the third chapter speaks of the commencement of these precursive inflictions. "Behold the Lord Jehovah of Hosts, is One that taketh away from Jerusalem and from Judah stay and staff &c.;" that is to say, His habitual relation to Jerusalem and Judah was to become that of one who withdraws sustainment and protection. Two thousand and six hundred years nearly have passed since these words began to be fulfilled. Age after age, His hand has been stretched out against them in judgment, whilst they, on their part, have multiplied their transgressions against Him. And this will continue until the climax described in the third chapter has been fully reached,

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and that hour of closing judgment come, out of which the day of Israel's deliverance is suddenly to spring.

Assyria, Persia and Greece, have successively trampled down Jerusalem, and Rome has since smitten her to the dust; yet, all that has passed, though comprehended in the descriptions of calamity and woe given in these chapters, does not exhaust them. The great distinctive event, predicted in these chapters, is not yet accomplished; for they speak of Jerusalem's sudden and abiding *deliverance*. They tell us that the period of her deepest woe is that which is to give birth to her day of triumph and joy. The end of the third chapter, and the first verse of the fourth (two chapters which should be read as one), describe the fulness of her desolations; when suddenly, in the second verse of the fourth chapter, we find the words, "*IN THAT DAY* shall the Branch of Jehovah be for comeliness and for majesty . . . . . to the escaped of Israel." The testimony of woe and desolation ceases. Judgment gives place to mercy. The hand that had long smitten Jerusalem and Judah smites them no longer: they become the subjects of its fostering and protective care.

But this is yet in the future. What we have *now* to expect is to see revived in the land of Israel and in Jerusalem that scene of haughty and wanton luxuriousness which the concluding part of the third chapter describes. Once more the daughters of Zion will answer (and that more exactly than before) to the picture here drawn of meretricious adornment and

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wanton revelry. The tone of feeling which will at that moment pervade society, whether Gentile or Jewish, may from this passage be inferred. When a call to weeping and to confession is answered by a defiant cry of wanton revelry, what does it indicate? It is this that will awaken the judgments of the Lord, and cause the trumpets of wrath to be blown, and the vials of wrath to be poured out as detailed in the central part of the Revelation. "And it shall be that instead of sweet smell there shall be stench, and instead of a girdle the rope (of the slave), and instead of the flowing robe a girding of sackcloth—burning instead of beauty."

But great and terrible as these desolating chastisements will be, they will not finally humble the pride of man, nor bring iniquity to its end. Plague after plague was sent on Egypt of old by the hand of Moses and Aaron, yet the proud strength of Pharaoh was not broken until the Lord manifested His glory, and personally by His own outstretched hand smote the Egyptians unto destruction. So will it be again. The Lord Himself will arise to purge "the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." The day of His visitation, as described in the end of the second chapter, will overwhelm alike the transgressors in Israel and their transgressing oppressors.

Of Israel, however, He will not make a full end. "For I am with you, saith Jehovah, to save thee: though I make a full end of nations whither I have

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scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." Jer. xxx. 11.

But they shall not only be spared. They shall be blessed; and that abundantly. Their land shall be made "the joy of all lands." "The voice of joy shall be there, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the Lord of hosts: for Jehovah is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." Jer. xxxiii. 11. For why? *Why* is this tide of blessing to flow forth to *them* in their unworthiness, and through them, to all nations? It is because there has been connected with the Land of Israel, and through it, with the earth, One by means of whom the Land of Israel has not been fruitless in the sight of heaven. On the contrary, it has supplied that which is emphatically "The Fruit of the earth" unto God. Whatever may have been the luxuriance of evil—filled though the earth may have been with strange and accursed plants—oaks of Bashan, and haughty cedars that belong not to the garden of God, yet there has sprung up, lowly and "despised of men," in the Land of Israel, "a tender plant" in whom all perfectness of heavenly excellency was, and that excellency has not been forgotten. The perfectness of Heaven has been found in earth. "The Fruit of the Earth" is now indeed, withdrawn from earth and hidden in the Heavens. But He shall again come forth. The tender plant that has been despised is to become "a plant of renown," and its beauty shall be recog-

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nised. It shall be for comeliness and majesty as well as for salvation. "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely, and this is that which one shall proclaim unto her, JEHOVAH IS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jer. xxxiii. 16.

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NOTES ON ISAIAH III. & IV.

Verses 1 to 3 of Ch. iii.

For behold the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts, is One that taketh away from Jerusalem and from Judah stay and staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water: the mighty man and the man of war, judge and prophet, and diviner and elder: the captain of fifty and the honourable man: the man of science and the skilled in art, and the wise in incantation [or in whispers]. *And I will give children to be their princes and babes* (literally childishnesses) *shall rule over them.*

For behold the Lord &c.] In the various calamities that have fallen on Jerusalem from the days of Isaiah onward, this chapter has received from time to time germinant or progressive fulfilments—all such germinant accomplishments being intimations to faith of the coming of the great final day of visitation. The relation of the Lord to Jerusalem has long been that of "One that taketh away (observe the force of the present participle מֵסִיר, as denoting habitual and continued action) *stay and staff*," i.e. all the ordinary sustainments of their strength. When, therefore, Israel return in unbelief to their land and city, and seek to re-strengthen

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themselves there, they will defy God in respect of that very relation which He has declared that He holds towards them as the withdrawer of their strength. He has said to them, "Lo-ammi, *not* my people: Lo-ruhamah, *not* having obtained mercy," whereas they will continue to act as if they were God's people, as if they were the subjects of His mercy, as if "stay and staff" had not been withdrawn from them.

Stay and staff.] מִשְׁעָן וּמִשְׁעֲנָה. The same words in Hebrew, the one masculine, the other feminine in form—an eastern mode of expressing totality. This verse will be fulfilled *in its completeness* when the plagues described in the central parts of the Revelation are poured out. The general meaning of the whole passage is, that all the resources of Israel, whether good or bad, whether granted originally by God or devised by themselves, shall be cut off. "Vera et falsa a Judæis pariter auferentur." *Jerome.* The enumeration is as follows. *The mighty man*—the man naturally mighty and strong. *The man of war*—the man made skilful by instruction, the trained warrior. *The judge and the prophet*—the heads of civil and religious life. *The diviner**—he who seeks supernatural power from

* It seems impossible to understand this word "*diviner*" in a good sense as some have done: nor is there any instance of the verb קָסַם of which this is the participle, being used in a good sense. The substantive קֶסֶם is once used in a good sense in Prov. xvi. 10. "Divination is in the lips of the king." This will be true in Israel when the great Melchisedek comes having Urim and Thummin (see Neh. vii. 65); but there will be no holy divination in Israel before *that.*

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Satan. *The elder*—he whom office and age dignify. *The captain of fifty and the honourable man*, or literally, the man of stately look—persons appointed to military or high civil office. *The man of science*, literally the man of knowledge, the knowing one, but used in contrast apparently with the man of practical skill, *the skilled in art** mentioned in the next clause. *The wise in incantation*, or one skilful in whispered speech [*συνετον ψιθυρισμῳ*, *Aquila*] because wizards whispered and muttered. See Is. viii. 19.

And I will give children to be their rulers, and childishnesses shall govern them.] Christendom, and real Christians too in Christendom, have to remember that what is written respecting Israel is written as a warning to us. Have we never seen Christians, when they have left the guidance of the Word of God, become enfeebled, stripped of their true strength, and ruled by puerilities and follies, or worse? Is "wisdom" and "sound speech" that cannot be condemned found in the hearts and lips of Christians at the present hour? Do they know and cleave to the Scriptures of Truth?

Verse 5 of Ch. III.

And the people shall tyrannise,† man against man, each

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* חכם חרשים. Sept. *σοφον αρχιτεκτονα*. Mechanicarum artium peritum.—*Vitringa.*

† *Act tyrannically.* The passive construction, "*the people shall be oppressed,*" does not agree so well with the usage of the preposition following as the reflexive one now commonly adopted. —*Alexander.*

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one against his neighbour: they shall be insolent, the young man against the old, the worthless against the worthy.

And the people shall tyrannise &c.] When God in anger withdraws the blessing of government, and allows individual selfishness to display itself, the result is a multiplication of tyrants. Man naturally loves to exalt himself, and to found his own greatness upon the subjection of his neighbour. Thus the weak and they that fear God become a prey. The history both of the Church and of the world abundantly attests this.

Verses 6 and 7 of Ch. III.

When a man shall take hold of his brother in his father's house [and say], *Raiment* [or an honourable garment] *thou hast, be thou a ruler unto us, and let this ruin be under thy hand: he shall lift up* [*his voice* or *his hand* in the attitude of swearing] *in that day, saying, I will not be a healer; and in my house there is no bread, and there is no raiment: ye shall not make me a ruler of the people.*

In my house there is no bread, and there is no raiment.] Such has been, and will again be, the cry of the earthly Israel. Contrast with this the experience of the true Israel of God. They see by faith the great Head of Israel, whom Israel knows not; but *they* know that with Him, withdrawn indeed from earth and hidden in the heavens, there is bread, and with Him there is raiment wherewith they are clothed unto eternal life. The knowledge of faith is often helped by contrast. If to

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Israel is said, Lo-ammi—not my people, to us is said, *Ammi*—my people. If to them is said, *Lo-ruhamah*—"not having obtained mercy," to us is said, *Ruhamah*—"having obtained mercy." See 1 Pet. ii. 10.

Verse 8 of Ch. iii.

For stumbled hath Jerusalem, and Judah hath fallen, because their tongue and their doings have been toward Jehovah to resist the eyes of His majesty.

Toward Jehovah.] The particle אֶל in certain connections has the force of עַל, *against*. Here, however, it is better to retain its proper force—*towards*. To pretend to seek unto Jehovah and to worship Him, whilst at the same time His will is resisted, and His Word nullified by Tradition, has been the characteristic sin both of Israel and of Christendom. Pan-Anglican and Pan-Romanist synods supply fearful examples of this. Has not Pan-Anglicanism recently owned and fraternized with the corrupt idolatrous Churches of the East?

Verses 9 to 11 of Ch. iii.

The shew of their faces hath witnessed against them; their sin, like Sodom, they have disclosed; they have hidden it not. Woe unto their soul, for they have recompensed unto themselves evil. Say ye of the righteous [singular] *that it shall be well* [with him], *for the fruit of their doings they shall eat. Woe unto the wicked, ill* [shall be unto him] *for that rendered by his hands shall be unto him done.*

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Say ye of the righteous &c.] There never was, and never shall be, a period when God has none in the earth to own Him, and testify to His Truth. There will never be a period when all saintship shall cease, as some idly talk. "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the age." However long judgment may be delayed, faith knows that there will be retribution at last both as regards evil and good.

Verse 12 of Ch. iii.

My people! their oppressors are childish, and women rule over them. My people! they that direct thee are seducers, and the way of thy paths they corrupt* [or *swallow up, cause to disappear, destroy*].

My people &c.] Great tenderness and compassion is expressed in these words. Yet the people go on to follow the seducers, and heed not the appeal of God, nor the pleading of His servants. They *must be* seduced who test not what they hear by the Word of God. "Take heed how ye hear." To take Scripture from us, that it might not be the touch-stone by which we try all things, is always the great aim of the Destroyer. When Scripture is not adhered to, it is marvellous how Christians even become swayed by puerilities and folly.

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* "Gesenius and Hitzig explain נגשׂין as a *pluralis majestaticus* referring to Ahaz, which is needless and arbitrary. מעלל is in the singular, because it is used adjectively, the predicate being often in the singular when the subject is plural."—*Alexander.*

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Verses 13 to 15 of Ch. III.

*Jehovah raiseth himself up to plead, and standeth to judge peoples. Jehovah will enter into judgment with the elders of his people, and the princes thereof. Ye it is that have consumed the vineyard, and the spoil of the poor-one** [afflicted-one] *is in your houses. What mean ye that ye crush my people, and grind the faces of the poor, saith the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts.*

Jehovah raiseth himself up . . . . . to judge peoples.] It was a thought by no means distasteful to Israel that Jehovah their God would raise Himself up to judge "peoples:" but they were little disposed to recognise that when He arose to judge "peoples," He would also enter into judgment with the elders of *His* people, and with *their* Princes. They it is who are the despoilers of God's vineyard (see parable in Luke xx. 19). Their relation to Him, who was the poor and afflicted-One (see Ps. xli. 1, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor-one"), and to all others who have followed His steps, has been one of violence and spoil always. Has it been otherwise in Christendom? How often have the Priests and Elders of Christendom spoiled and crushed those who have sought to go without the gate bearing the reproach of Christ's Truth. Truly the spoil of the

* The use of singular words, such as "righteous-one," "afflicted-one" (see verse 10), in association with plurals in the context, is intended probably to remind us that there is *One* to whom such expressions do in a singular and pre-eminent sense belong.

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poor-one is in their houses, and it will be remembered when the hour of retribution comes.

Verses 16 to 23 of Ch. iii.

And Jehovah said, Because that the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched neck, and with their eyes glance wantonly, mincing and tripping as they go, and make a tinkling with their feet; therefore the Lord shall make bald the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and their nakedness Jehovah will uncover. In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of the ankle-bands, and the caps of net-work, and the crescents, and the pendants and the necklaces and the veils, and the head-dresses and the ankle-chains, and the girdles, and the perfume-boxes [literally *houses of the soul*], *and the amulets, the rings, and the nose-jewels, the dress-robes, and the mantles, and the shawls, and the crisping-pins, the mirrors, and the tunics and the turbans, and the scarfs.**

The ankle-bands &c., &c.] Wanton luxuriousness

* The general bearing of this passage is sufficiently evident, though there may be some difficulty in determining the exact force of the expressions. The minute specification of these things shows that they are not deemed trifles in the estimate of Heaven. Dress is the expression of the heart. The following is the rendering of Dr. Alexander. "*And Jehovah said, Because the daughters of Zion are lofty and walk with outstretched neck* (literally, *stretched of neck so as to seem taller*), *and gazing with their eyes, and with a tripping walk they walk, and with their feet they make a tinkling* (*i.e.* with the metallic rings or bands worn around their ankles), *therefore the Lord will make bald the crown of the daughters of Zion, and their nakedness Jehovah will un-*

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like this has often already been displayed both in Christendom and in Israel. Society around us at present is by these things branded for its doom. Israel, however, whilst driven from their Land and scattered, have not the opportunity corporately of presenting themselves thus. But soon the opportunity will be afforded them. Misled and hardened by what they have learned in Christendom, they will return to their Land to manifest their old habits of evil in fuller and more elaborate development. There will be a brief moment of perhaps unparalleled prosperity. But it will soon give place to desolation: for read the words that follow.

VERSES 24 TO 26 OF CH. III. AND 1 OF CH. IV.*

And it shall be that instead of perfume there shall be stench; and instead of a girdle a rope† [of the slave];

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cover. In that day, the Lord will take away the bravery of the ankle-bands, and the cauls, and the crescents, the pendants and the bracelets, and the veils, the caps and the ankle-chains, and the girdles and the houses of breath (meaning probably the perfume-boxes or smelling bottles worn by the oriental women in their girdles), *and the amulets* (the same word used above in verse 3 in the sense of *incantations*, but which seems like the Latin *fascinum* to have also signified the antidote), *the rings and the nose-jewels, the holiday-dresses and the mantles, and the robes and the purses, the mirrors and the tunics, and the turbans and the veils.*"

* The fourth chapter is really a part of the third. I have treated it as such, and added its verses to those of the preceding chapter. "Ultimis verbis tertii capitis connectuut Hebræi primun versum capitis sequentis, neque inconguenter."—*Forerius.*

† See Gesenius, נֶקֶפֶת, a rope bound round a female slave or captive for a girdle. lxx. σχοινιον. Vulg. *funiculus.*

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and instead of braided hair baldness; and instead of the flowing robe a girding of sackcloth; burning instead of beauty. Thy men by the sword shall fall, and thy strength by war. And her gates shall lament and wail: and desolate she shall sit upon the ground. And there shall lay hold seven women of one man in that day, saying, Our own bread we will eat, our own raiment we will put on: only let thy name be called upon us: take thou away our reproach.

And it shall be &c.] These words refer to a desolation yet to come; foreshadowed, doubtless, but not accomplished in desolations that have been. The desolation here spoken of is marked as future by this, that out of it springs the hour of Israel's deliverance and glory. See the second verse of the fourth chapter. The woes that will fall on Jerusalem, partly from the immediate inflictions of the Divine hand, and partly from the "treading down" of Antichrist, exceed in severity any thing that has yet been known in earth. "It shall be a time of tribulation such as has not been since there was a nation, even to that same hour." See Dan. xii. 1, and Mark xiii. 19. See also Is. xxix. and Zech. xiv. 1. But then it is that Michael shall stand up to deliver.

And there shall lay hold seven women of one man in that day &c.] "Seven" thus used is a number expressive of totality and completeness. The desolation shall be so great that multitudes of women shall seek the shelter

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of the name of one man. Faith may be *reminded* by this of the relation of believers to Him to whom in their desolation they fly for all things: but that is not the subject of this verse. In coming to Christ we do not say, "our own bread we will eat; our own raiment we will put on:" we say, we have nothing. We look to *THEE* for *all* things—to be clothed, to be fed, to be preserved.

Verse 2 of Ch. iv.

In that day shall the Branch of Jehovah be for comeliness and for majesty, and the fruit of the Land be for dignity and beauty to the escaped of Israel.

In that day &c.] Out of the night of Israel's sorrow, suddenly shall spring the morning of joy. The name "Branch," or "Sprout," is frequently applied to the Messiah of Israel. Thus in Jer. xxiii. 5, "I will raise unto David a righteous Branch:" and Jer. xxxiii. 15, "In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David . . . . . in those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely, and this is that which [one] shall call or proclaim to her, Jehovah is our righteousness."* See

* The correction of the translation of this passage is important. Jerusalem is not called, "Jehovah our righteousness." The words of the original are—וְזֶה אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרָא־לָהּ יְהוָה צִדְקֵנוּ. For examples of this use of ל after קָרָא see Gen. xxxi. 54, xxxix. 14, and especially Isaiah lxi. 2.

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also Zech. iii. 8, "Behold I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH," and Zech. vi. 12, "Behold the man whose name is, The BRANCH."

"The Fruit of the earth," or "of the Land," is also to be understood as the name of the Messiah.* He whose "goings forth have been from old, from everlasting," hath, in becoming a man and an Israelite, so connected Himself with the earth and with the Land of Israel, that the earth, and more especially the Land of Israel, may claim one fruit that is perfect in excellency and beauty before God. Compare Lev. xxiii. 10, where Jesus is typified by the sheaf of first-fruits taken from the Land of Israel as the fruit thereof, and presented unto God: "when ye be come unto the land which I give you, *and shall reap the harvest thereof*, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest; and he shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah to be accepted for you." This was fulfilled

* "Etiam secundum Judæos hic per *Germen* intelligitur Messias Filius David, quem Propheta et *Germen Domini et Fructum terræ* vocat, tectis verbis Divinitatem ejus et Hunamitatem exprimens. Sed perversi Judæi in alium sensum hæc torquent verba, ut Messias in pueritiâ futurus sit quasi gratissimum Germen sed sine fructu; at cum creverit producet fructum redemptionis, liberans a tyrannide Gog et Magog."—*Munster and Clarius.* See *Critici Sacri in locum.* "The parallel passages," says Dr. Alexander, "already quoted (namely, Zech. iii. 8 &c.) are referred to the Messiah even by Gesenius, who only hesitates to make the same admission here, because he thinks the parallel phrase, '*fruit of the earth*,' cannot be so applied. But no expression could in fact be more appropriate, whether it be translated '*fruit of the Land*,' and referred to his Jewish extraction (Hengstenbergh), or '*fruit of the earth*,' and referred to his human nature."—(*Vitringa.*)

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when Jesus rose as the first-fruits of those that had fallen asleep (απαρχη των κεκοιμημενων) that is to say, the first-fruits of all the saints (such as Abel, Abraham, David and the Prophets) who had died before Jesus rose. From other passages we know that we too, the election from among the Gentiles, are included in this verse, and that He is our first-fruits also—our forerunner and the pledge of our coming glory, when we are to be changed into His heavenly likeness. The "dignity and the beauty" of this great "Fruit of the Earth or Land" has long been recognised above; but the hour is coming when it shall be for dignity and beauty to the escaped of Israel in the earth beneath, and when they too shall rejoice in Him.

Verses 3 to 6 of Ch. iv.

And it shall be that he that is left in Zion, and the spared in Jerusalem, shall be called holy [literally, holy shall be said to him] *to every one appointed for life* [literally, written down, or enrolled for life] *in Jerusalem; when the Lord shall have purged away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and when the blood* [bloods] *of Jerusalem He shall have purged from the midst of her by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning* [i.e. by His Spirit acting as a Spirit of judgment and of burning]. *And Jehovah will create over the whole extent of Mount Zion, and over all her assemblies, a cloud by day, and smoke and the brightness of flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there shall be a covering. And there shall be a covert for a shade by day from heat, and for*

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a shelter, and for a hiding-place from storm and from rain.

A hiding-place &c.] This passage, like many others, shows that the methods of God's dealing with His *earthly* people during the millennium will be employment of remedial agency. In the sphere that will be occupied above the heavens by the "Church of the first-born ones," that is, those who rise in the first resurrection, no such agency will be needed; for there will be nothing to remedy.* But on the earth it will be otherwise. *There*, many things that bear banefully and sorrowfully on human life will be allowed to continue. There will not be the absolute removal of such agencies: but there will be the habitual interposition of protective power. There will be enemies, but there will be defence: there may be heat, but there will be protective shade: there may be storms, but there will be a covert. The visible symbol of the protective power of Jehovah will be ever

* Thus in the description of the Heavenly Jerusalem in Rev. xxii. 2, it is said, that "the leaves of the trees were for the healing of the nations," i.e. the nations of the millennial earth—those nations of which it is said that they are guided by the light of the Heavenly City. "The nations shall walk by means of the light thereof." Such is the correct reading. In the Heavenly City itself there will be no "nations," (ἐθνη) nor any thing that needs healing. All is perfect *there*.

It must be carefully observed, that the first eight verses of Rev. xxi. treat of a period entirely distinct from that described in the subsequent part of the chapter. The first eight verses of Rev. xxi. describe the relation of the New Jerusalem to the new or post-millennial earth into which it descends. The rest of the chapter

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present by night and by day over Mount Zion and all her assemblies: and as Zion will then be the governmental centre of the earth, all who so acknowledge it and bow to its control, will doubtless share its blessings.

Yet, however great and glorious the manifestation of the power of Christ during the millennium will be, it is nevertheless an imperfect and temporary dispensation. Although during its course "all enemies will be subdued," and millions by means of the everlasting gospel be gathered into the heavenly fold for ever, yet the very fact that there will be enemies, and that there will be souls to be saved, prŏves that "the dispensation of the fulness of times" is not reached. Righteousness is abidingly "to dwell," not in the millennial earth, but in "new heavens and a new earth" that are not created until after the millennial heavens and earth have passed away, and no place found for them. Then all shall be new. Then all the redeemed of every dis-

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on to the end of the fifth verse of Rev. xxii. describes its relation to the millennial earth antecedently. During the millennium the New Jerusalem will be Επουρανια, i.e. above the created Heavens על-השמים—having descended from God out of Heaven, but taking up an intermediate position between Heaven and earth above the firmament, and never entering the millennial earth. But into the *new* or post-millennial earth it will enter. All will be *perfect* there. There "flesh and blood" will have no place, but only that which is in the likeness of the Second-Man, the *last* Adam. The relation of the New Jerusalem to the millennial earth will be strictly analogous to that of the Holy Place in the Tabernacle. The Holy Place stood *between* the Holy of Holies and the external Court, distinct from, but connected with, both.

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pensation shall form together one body—all glorified—all bearing alike the likeness of their risen Lord. It will be glory into which flesh and blood cannot enter. Millions will be gathered to Christ in the millennial earth and made heirs of this everlasting glory; but that glory shall be in a new creation. "If any man be in Christ Jesus [to him there is] a new creation. Old things have passed away, behold all things are become new." These words are true of every believer in every dispensation—and will be seen to be true when "the dispensation of the fulness of times has come."

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THOUGHTS ON ISAIAH V.

When a vine has been planted in a soil rich and fertile, when it has been watched over, and pruned, and dressed wisely and patiently, so that it has received all that skill and assiduous cultivation can bestow, if under such conditions the vine prosper not—if it still bear evil fruit, it is very evident that the fault must be in itself. There must be viciousness of sap. The fruit is not good because the tree is not good.

Such is the instruction conveyed to Israel and to ourselves in the chapter before us. They are the vineyard —the once cultivated vineyard. "The vineyard of Jehovah of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the man of Judah is the plant of his delights, and he waited for judgment, but behold destruction [bloodshed]; for righteousness, but behold a cry." Yet Israel recognise not their condition. They cannot indeed say that they have brought forth fruit unto God (else why are they scattered?), yet they still affirm that the power of fruitfulness is in them. They maintain that whatsoever else may be needed by them, they need not right sap. Whatever may be the cause of their want of fruitfulness, they refuse to trace it to any *radical* deficiency in themselves. Therefore they still trust in themselves as

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if they had inherent in themselves a well-spring of good that needs nothing but favourable opportunity for development. They boast of being Abraham's seed, and yet, the great spiritual characteristic of Abraham, FAITH (without which none can be in any blessed sense children of Abraham) they lack utterly.

For faith eschews every thing that emanates from the creature, and looks wholly for all things unto God. Whatever may be needed, whether forgiveness of sins, or preservation, or guidance, whether power to trust or power to obey, it looks to God for all. It looks to God not only to give, but also to sustain and direct that which He has given. It knows that God has "a good pleasure" (ευδοκια) toward His people, and that on behalf of that "good pleasure" (υπερ της ευδοκιας αυτου) He works in them both to will and to do; first "giving unto them a good will, and working with them when they have that will." It rejoices to say, "All things are OF GOD,—OF Him, and THROUGH Him, and UNTO Him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen." It saith this, not in the spirit of inertness or slothfulness, but as having, under God and with God, new interests and employments in the things of God; and whilst ever resting in and comforting itself in the blessed truth that the hand of God has "laid hold of" His people to keep them surely unto eternal life, yet it also recognises that it is their duty and their privilege to forget the things that are behind, and to press onward to the things that are before, if so be they might apprehend (lay hold on) that for which Christ Jesus

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hath apprehended (laid hold upon) them. Philippians iii. 12. The word of God in every dispensation, to every one of His saints is, "In *ME* is thy fruit found."

Accordingly, when God was pleased to separate Abraham unto Himself, and to pronounce over him words of irrevocable blessing, the blessing was not founded on any thing that Abraham was or should be (for he was justified as "ungodly"), but it came as the free unmerited bestowment of God—the result of His own purpose to bless in the sovereignty of His own grace. Hence these words of sevenfold blessing:

"I will make of thee a great nation."

"And I will bless thee."

"And I will make thy name great."

"And thou shalt be a blessing."

"And I will bless them that bless thee."

"And I will curse him that curseth thee."

"And in thee shall all peoples of the earth be blessed."

Many times afterwards were these and like promises repeated, but always in terms of the same unconditional bestowment. God was the giver—Abraham the receiver. He disdained not to receive as a gift that which he knew he was utterly unable to earn. In God he hoped: in God he confided. He hoped and confided in Him for all things; and his hope and confidence were not in vain.

But it was far otherwise with Israel. With "blinded heart" (see 2 Cor. iii. 14) they presented themselves before God at Sinai; and there discarding, and (as far as in them lay) abrogating the covenant of grace made with

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Abraham, they voluntarily and deliberately placed themselves under another that was not of grace—a covenant under which they who had never in one single thing obeyed perfectly from their youth up, undertook, nevertheless, to forfeit all blessing, and to inherit all curse, if they did not in every jot and tittle obey, outwardly and inwardly, a covenant whose holiness they failed even to comprehend.

Yet God, though He permitted Israel to prove the consequences of the awful bond (χειρογραφον, see Col. ii. 14) under which they had placed themselves, did not therefore abrogate His original covenant of promise. "The Covenant, that was afore confirmed of God in Christ, the Law, that was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." Gal. iii. 17. Yet though God cancelled not His covenant, but has continued ever since to give it effect in the case of all the true children of Abraham (for not all who are outwardly Israel are Israel, but they who are of faith, whether Jew or Gentile, they it is who are the true children of Abraham), yet though God has been and will be true to His promise, He has nevertheless permitted Israel as a nation to prove the consequences of standing under a covenant of works, and appointed that the history, even of His own servants (such as Moses), should exemplify what even they would inherit, if dealt with strictly on the ground of unsinning obedience to His Law.

Moses, though "faithful in all his house," yet tried by the strictness of the Law he administered, was not

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deemed worthy of entering even the earthly Canaan. Though the meekest of men, yet, provoked by the frowardness of Israel, he on one occasion failed, and spake unadvisedly with his lips; whereby violating the terms of God's perfect Law, he brought on himself punishment from the hand of God. "The Lord was angry with me for your sakes, and sware that I should not go over Jordan, and that I should not go into that good land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance. But I must die in this land, I must not go over Jordan." Deut. iv. 21. Such was Moses' own personal experience of the holiness of the Law which he administered—the Law which said, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." If the title of Moses to his heavenly inheritance had rested on the same ground as did his title to enter Canaan, he would have forfeited it for ever. But it was not so. He who, tried by the Covenant of Sinai, was not counted worthy of entering even the earthly Canaan, was, because of another Covenant—the Abrahamic Covenant of grace, deemed worthy to stand on the Mount of Transfiguration by the side of His glorified Lord—himself glorified. Tried by the Law he was weighed in the balances and found wanting. Under the Covenant of grace, established in Christ as "the Lamb fore-ordained," he stood an heir of glory. So has it been, and so ever shall it be with all who are "of faith."

The "prayer of Moses," as recorded in the ninetieth Psalm, shows us how bitterly his soul apprehended the

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withering effects wrought on Israel by the holiness of that Law of which he was the minister. "We are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath we are troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told. . . . . Who knoweth the power of thine anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath:" that is, the more we seek to walk in thy fear, the nearer we approach unto thee to serve thee, the more our failures and short-comings are made manifest; so that our very attempts to serve thee, afford fresh occasions for the manifestation of thy just displeasure. How could it be otherwise, if man with indwelling sin in him, stands to be tested by a Law that treats the least inward deflection from perfectness as sin, and says, "he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all." Well might Moses say, "we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath we are troubled." How contrasted with the words of the Apostle as the unfolder of the Abrahamic covenant of grace! "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died . . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." The Apostle speaks as the minister of the Abrahamic covenant of grace bringing righteousness and

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life: Moses as the minister of the covenant of works working condemnation and death, because of man's incompetency to meet its holiness. Unless this Psalm of Moses had been "*a prayer*," there would have been no hope in it. It would have been darkness unrelieved by any abiding ray of brightness. But as praying, the soul of Moses was able to look on into the future and say, "O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us: yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." So shall it be when the covenant of grace which Paul ministered shall at last be brought to bear upon Israel —when they shall be graffed back into that olive-tree, the fatness of whose root is, "gift and calling" in the sovereignty of the grace of God. They shall cease from themselves *then*, and learn in truth to say, "Thou, O Jehovah, hast wrought all our works for us." *Then* shall the prayer of Moses be answered, and the work of their hands be established unto them.

But it is otherwise now. From Sinai to the present hour, the heart of Israel has been "blinded." They *will* trust in their supposed innate powers of fruitfulness: and fruitfulness indeed there has been; but fruitfulness of evil. "I waited for my vineyard to bear grapes: it bore wild grapes."

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Six several times in this chapter is woe pronounced against the varied forms of Israel's iniquity. There was *selfish covetousness* that went on adding structure to structure, field to field, until space failed: there was *joyous revelry*—the pipe and tabret, the harp and wine were in their feasts, but the work of Jehovah and the operation of His hand they considered not. There was toilsome but willing *servitude to iniquity:* they strove, as if harnessed to its car, to drag it onward as by chariot-ropes, whilst the counsel of the Holy One of Israel they scoffed at and defied. There was the resolute determination *to call evil good, and good evil,* and so to contravene the eternal principles of God's governmental holiness. There was *self-complacent conceit* because of their wisdom and prudence, though it was wisdom in evil, prudence and in iniquity. There was *drunken exhiliration and merriment as they encouraged one another in perverting judgment,* taking from the righteous his righteousness, and justifying the wicked for a bribe. Such were the fruits that abounded in Israel—such the evils against which the lips of God pronounced woe, telling them how their root should be as rottenness, and how their blossom should go up as dust before the whirlwind. Yet they heeded not. His counsel they despised. At His warnings they scoffed. "Let him hasten his work that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!" When they who have long perverted Truth, go on, instead of humbling themselves, to revile the Truth they have prostituted, and to scoff at Scrip-

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ture (and this is that which is being done in England now), it is a sure sign that judgment unto destruction is drawing nigh.

But we have not to speak of God's ways in judgment without speaking also of His ways in grace. In the midst of all this iniquity of Israel, before it had reached the matured form of its development (for even yet "the transgressors have not come to the full") one suddenly appeared in the midst of the fruitless vineyard, saying, "I am the TRUE vine." That Vine was indeed planted in the earth, but its sap was heavenly: its origin was from above. John iii. 31. True fructifying power was there, and there alone: there only was perfectness of fruit. And this the consciences of the rulers in Israel recognised. They discerned in Christ heavenliness—they discerned its contrast with their own earthiness. They knew that no man ever spake, or even acted as He. Yet although He testified of grace and sought to gather under the sure and everlasting protection of His most blessed name, they nevertheless hated Him; because His ways condemned their ways, and they were not prepared, by recognising the rightness of His ways, to condemn their own.

Yet Christ's mission was not in vain. "All," said He, "that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." There were some who came to Him saying, "Lord, to whom else should we go; thou hast the words of eternal life." They leaned their sinful souls on Him as the One sent to receive sinners and to save; and they be-

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came branches in the true Vine. The Father engrafted them; and the Father as the Husbandman watched over them, to cleanse and to prune; and they received of the living sap and became fruit-bearing branches. Therefore the true Vine, though Israel have despised it—though all the influences of earth under Satan have been against it—though storm and tempest have assailed it, has, nevertheless, been so watched over by the great Husbandman that its branches have never been altogether fruitless. It has always had branches that have yielded *some* fruit. True children of the kingdom—true disciples of Christ never have been, and never shall be altogether wanting. In the true Vine the power of Jehovah for fruitfulness in the earth IS. It is a power fixed and abiding that Satan cannot destroy nor banish from the earth. Some fruitfulness, therefore, there ever has been, and some there shall continue to be even to the end. "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the age."

But Satan has dared to bring into this Vine branches which God has not set there, and which do not, and cannot receive of its sap so as to be either fruitful or healthful branches. God has permitted that there should be a false profession of the name of Christ. The moment that Sacerdotalism pretends to give faith, and to give life by its ordinances—the moment it says, "seek in faith for oneness with Christ in the blessed sacrament of His body and blood," we see in operation a mighty power that will surely multiply branches in the Vine that may *apparently* flourish: but every branch

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that beareth not fruit the great Husbandman will sooner or later remove. The excision may not be immediate; but false will be distinguished from true profession at last. In the meanwhile, the false branches have so choked and buried the true, that even where there is fruit, it becomes almost undiscernible amidst the luxuriance of fruitlessness.

Which of the iniquities denounced in Israel is not equally found in Christendom? Selfish covetousness; the calling falsehood truth, and truth falsehood; energy in the service of iniquity,—these and like things have branded Christendom, as much or more, than Israel. "Therefore Hades hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure; there goeth down [into her] her pomp and her multitude and her noise, and he that in her rejoiceth." This is an awful verse: as true of Christendom as of Israel, and of Israel as Christendom. Their pomp and revelry is not called "*their*" pomp and revelry, but *her* pomp and revelry, that is, the pomp and revelry of Hades. To Hades it belongeth, and into Hades it shall go. Hades shall claim her own.*

But Satan has not only sought to mar the beauty, and hinder the fruitfulness of the branches of the true Vine; he has long been preparing a rival vine—a vine called in Scripture, "the vine of the earth;" whose clusters shall be many and fair, but they shall be cast into "the winepress of the wrath of God." Rev. xiv. 19. Let

* For remarks on Hades and its locality see "Occasional Papers," Vol. I., Number 3, p. 109.

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us place ourselves yet a few years onward in the course of time when the godless scepticism now rising around us shall have led on multitudes in Israel and multitudes in Christendom into the avowed rejection of revealed Truth; and we shall then be able to apprehend the circumstances under which "the vine of the earth" will be cherished and grow. A person of Absalom-like attractiveness will arise who will teach men that all that they have heard respecting God and Christ is a lie: and will present himself to them as their deliverer and their God. He will be the great cherisher of this vine of the earth, and will nurture it unto its maturity. Suppose its roots planted at Jerusalem; entwine its branches around the kingdoms of the Roman World (ἡ οικουμενη), let Antichrist cherish it,—and we shall have before us that which earth will soon regard as its choicest and most favoured plant. This is the vine which men will soon regard as the object of their closest and most assiduous care: they will cherish it, and water it, and rejoice over it as that which is to fill their cup to overflowing with wine sweet and precious: but "their vine is of the vine of Sodom and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall: their clusters are bitter. Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps." Long has the doom of this vine been prophetically pronounced. "And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her

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grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." Such is the end—the now not distant end, of "human progress."

How have we to long for that hour when Israel shall at last recognise these things, and understand the cause of their own fruitlessness, and seek and receive heavenly sap through union with the one true Vine! Culture then shall no longer be bestowed on them in vain. "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." The Lord their God will give them fruitfulness. "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard and observed Him: I am like a green fir tree. From Me is thy fruit found." Hosea xiv. 4—8.

But it is otherwise, far otherwise now. The wall of the once cherished vineyard has been long broken down, and it has been laid waste. It has ceased to be pruned

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and digged. The clouds have been commanded to rain no rain upon it. Nevertheless, there has been no softening of heart, no repentance. Although the Lord has stretched out His hand against them and smitten them, and caused their hills to rock with earthquakes, and their carcases to be torn in the midst of their streets, yet Israel still pursue their Cain-like path, devoting, in increased distance from God, their untiring energy to the things of earth. Still, as of old, whenever occasion serves, they go on adding house to house, and field to field: the harp and the viol, the tabret, and the pipe, and wine are still in their feasts; and, when again re-gathering to their Land, they shall there for a season re-enact the past, there shall again be found there "pomp, and multitude, and noise"—a re-established prosperity, but without, and in defiance of, God. "Therefore Hades shall enlarge herself, and open her mouth without measure; and her pomp, and her multitude, and her noise, and he that in her rejoiceth shall go down." They shall go down quick into the pit, and man shall be brought low . . . . . "but Jehovah of Hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God, the Holy One, shall be sanctified in righteousness. Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat;" in other words, the day of visitation will have come; the haughtiness of man shall be brought low; the meek shall eat and be satisfied, and the former fat ones of the earth shall resign their wasted and vacated inheritance to those who had before been outcasts, but who then shall be comforted for ever. Such

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will be the result when judgment shall have wrought its work, and the Lord shall have "founded Zion, and the poor of His people shall trust in it."

Christendom, as I have already said, has been warned touching these things. It has had before it a living lesson in the judgments that have fallen on Israel; for on them wrath has already anticipatively come. (εφθασε δ'ε επ' αυτους ἡ οργη.) 1 Thess. ii. 16. The instructions of Jesus and of the Apostles have been added to the light brought by the Prophets, and have been professedly by Christendom accepted. Yet really it has given no heed. With greater light, and increased responsibility, it has trodden the same path as Israel. There has been the same covetousness, the same unholy revelry, the same contempt of the judgments of the Lord. They too have made the Word of God of none effect by their traditions. The web of evil that is yet to be woven under Antichrist, and displayed in Immanuel's land, would not be what it will be, unless apostasy nurtured in the midst of Christendom, were to be the chief weaver of it. Multitudes from Christendom will gather around Antichrist and worship him, and the very nations which have hitherto been the mightiest and most influential in Christendom, will give themselves over corporately and nationally to him, and become the pillars of his power. They who should have been a beacon to Israel, will, on the contrary, be to them a deceiving light, luring them to destruction.

This awful chapter, therefore, has not yet received its final accomplishment. The darkness and anguish

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spoken of in the concluding verses will come alike upon apostate Israel and their apostate Gentile betrayers. "He shall look unto the land, and behold darkness! Anguish and light!* It is dark in the clouds thereof." May God in His mercy preserve us from the blindness that deems these and like verses to be past. The judgments are not past, neither the iniquities on which they are to fall.

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* See notes that follow, p. 133.

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NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verse 1.

I will sing (may it so please you) with reference to my Beloved, a song† of my Beloved touching his vineyard.*

I will sing, may it so please you &c.] Israel are addressed. This parabolic song was to be sung to them. There is solemn irony in the words, "may it so please you." It was not a song that would be grateful in their ears, but abhorrent. It is a record of their guilt and condemnation—a witness *against* them. Compare Deut. xxxi. 19: "write ye this song for you . . . . . that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel." It is not less, *mutatis mutandis*, a witness against Christendom. There is a solemn force too in the words, "*my* Beloved." The Prophet should have been able to associate Israel with himself and to say,

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* נָא, *pace tuâ*, is not an adverb of time, but a particle of entreaty.

† "Maurer's translation," *of my* Beloved, i.e. belonging to him, like לְדָוִד, a Psalm of David, is a form only used in titles and inscriptions. The ל has doubtless the same sense before this word, as before "his vineyard."—*Alexander.*

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"*our* Beloved." But he could not say this. Israel's love was not towards Jehovah their God, but towards strangers. Isaiah well nigh stood alone.

A song of my Beloved.] A song inspired by Him.

Verses 2 to 4.

My Beloved had a vineyard in a very fruitful hill [literally, in a horn, a son of oil]. *And he digged it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with vine of Sorek, and built a tower in the midst thereof: a wine-fat also he hewed out in it, and he waited for it to bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitant of Jerusalem and man of Judah, judge ye, I pray you, between me and my vineyard, what is there to do more for my vineyard that I have not done in it? Why when I waited for it to bear grapes did it bear wild grapes?*

Vine of Sorek.] Sorek (Judges xvi. 4) was a place not far from Eschol, famed for its grapes. Compare Jer. ii. 21. "Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were men of *faith*. The sap, therefore, of fruitfulness was in them. Promise and grace was their strength. But with Israel it was otherwise. Faith is not hereditary. "He is not a Jew that is one outwardly merely, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh."

What is there to do more to my vineyard &c.] Israel,

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among their other mercies, have had vouchsafed to them a full testimony to the grace that bringeth salvation. When the barren fig-tree, because of its barrenness, was about to be cut down, the keeper of the vineyard asked that it might be spared yet awhile, in order that he might dig about it and dung it. Accordingly, it *was* spared; and a fresh power of blessing was brought to bear on it,—first, by the ministry of Jesus, then of the Apostles. "How often," said the Lord Jesus, "would I have gathered you even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." See too the memorable words addressed by Peter in the Acts to the Heads and representatives of Jerusalem. "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, that so the times of refreshing may come (ὁπως αν ελθωσι) from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Him who hath been afore-ordained for you (τον προχεχειρισμενον) Christ Jesus: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all that God spake by the mouth of all His holy Prophets since the world began." If Jerusalem had bowed to these words, the times of refreshing would have come; but she refused the message, and persecuted them who brought it. Afterwards the Apostle Paul, as well as Gentiles by his ministry converted, bore testimony to Israel ("by men of other tongues and other lips will I speak to this people"): but this last testimony also was rejected. See Acts xxviii. 25. At length the long threatened desolation came. See the verses that follow.

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Verses 5 to 7.

And now I will (may it so please you) tell you what I do [literally, *what I am the doer of*] *to my vineyard.* [*That which I do is*] *to take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be for devouring; and to break down its wall, and it shall be for a trampling-place. And I make it a desolation, it shall not be pruned and it shall not be dressed, and there shall come up thorns and briars; and I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of Jehovah of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the man of Judah is the plant of his delights, and he waited for judgment, but behold destruction* [slaughter]; *for righteousness, but behold a cry.*

I will take away the hedge thereof &c.] The withdrawal of mercies that have been slighted or abused, is the first step in the judicial inflictions of God. The protection, cultivation, and all the kindly cherishing care that had been granted to Israel, was to be withdrawn. They were warned of the approaching withdrawal. But they humbled themselves not, nor repented. Christendom too, has had its warnings, but it has not humbled itself nor repented.

Verses 8 to 10.

Woe to them who join house to house [or who cause structure to touch structure]: *field to field they bring together, until place faileth, and ye be left to dwell by yourselves in the midst of the Land. In my ears* [saith] *Jehovah of Hosts, Of a truth houses manifold in number,*

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for desolation shall be: great houses and goodly without inhabitant: for ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and a homer of seed shall produce an ephah.

Their proud covetousness (for pride and covetousness often go together) which by its greedy selfishness sought to gain for itself a place of isolated loneliness in the earth, was to be punished by the very things in which they delighted being smitten. Though they might add house to house, and field to field, their houses should become without inhabitant, and their fields fruitless. These judgments have fallen on Israel, but they have not repented. They will soon return to their Land, and there display again the same habits. Christendom has followed the same path; and multitudes out of Christendom will join with Israel in those last constructions of pride and selfishness that are to close the history of the Day of man. They have this chapter still before them; but it speaks to them in vain.

Verses 11 to 14.

Woe to them that rise early in the morning, strong drink they follow after: that tarry in the twilight, wine inflameth them. And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and the pipe, and wine [*make up*] *their feasts; but the work of Jehovah they consider not, and the operation of His hands they have not discerned. Therefore banished is my people because of lack of knowledge and their* [literally, his or its, i.e. my people's] *glory is men famished* [literally, men of hunger] *and their multitude is dry with thirst.*

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Therefore Hades hath enlarged her appetite and opened her mouth without measure, and there goeth down her pomp, and her multitude, and her noise, and he that in her rejoiceth.

The work of Jehovah they consider not &c.] This awful picture has already received a verification in the past history of Israel, and will yet again be verified even more markedly. But though primarily belonging to them, is it not equally true of ourselves? Does this chapter admit of no application to favoured Protestant England? In our case, indeed, the judgments may, for a time, be chiefly moral—blindness of heart, famine of truth, moral perversion: but these things are judgments. When men, after having been brought into near proximity to light, suddenly renounce the things which they have professed to receive, and rush eagerly into darkness, is it not an evidence that delusion, causing them to believe lies, has fallen upon them, and is that no judgment? There is no infliction more terrible than that of judicial blindness. Is not society in England dividing itself between sacerdotal idolatry, and philosophic scepticism? Can the anointed eye of faith look upon our stately temples, our "broad-ways," our marts, our cities, and not see them crowded by "men of hunger"—men famished as to the bread of life, and yet they know it not. Yet the operation of the hand of God in judicially withdrawing light and sending darkness is not recognised. There is no humiliation—no confession. On the contrary, there was never an

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hour of greater moral intoxication. True indeed it is that the harp and the viol, the tabret, and the pipe, and wine, are literally in their feasts; outward noise and revelry are not wanting, but the moral intoxication and the resulting blindness is more terrible still. Therefore the hour is drawing nigh when Hades will claim her own. The pomp, and the multitude, and the noise is regarded as *her* pomp, *her* multitude, *her* noise. He that rejoiceth in these things rejoiceth in *her*, and she will soon claim him as her own. "Hades hath enlarged her appetite and opened her mouth without measure, and there goeth down *her* pomp, and *her* multitude, and her noise, and he that in her rejoiceth." May we be enabled steadily to view the things around us in the light of this awful verse. Judgment may tarry, but it will surely come. "I will recompense, saith the Lord."

Verses 15 to 17.

And man shall be brought down: and abased shall be the mighty man, and the eyes of the lofty shall be abased. But Jehovah of Hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God, the Holy One, shall be sanctified in righteousness. Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.

But Jehovah of Hosts shall be exalted in judgment &c.] The contrast between the condition of earth during the Day of man whilst Satan is the Deceiver of [ὁ πλανων] the nations, and in the coming age when Jehovah alone

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shall be exalted, is one of the chief themes of Scripture. Without seeing this, none can understand the Scripture, and wrong estimates will be formed of every thing that is passing in the Church and in the world. The lambs of Christ's flock cannot now feed as they should feed, quietly, peacefully—"none making them afraid." On the contrary, they are sent forth as in the midst of wolves, to be hunted, and worried, and devoured. "For thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." The more distinctly they have heard and obeyed their Shepherd's voice, the more has this been the case. Many of the lambs too have known what it is to feed on fouled pastures where their professed shepherds have fed them with poison, or fed them not at all. But it shall be otherwise in the coming age, in the "regeneration" (Matt. xix. 28) when "the times of refreshing" shall have come. They shall feed after their manner *then.*

Verses 18 and 19.

Woe unto them that drag iniquity along with cords of falsehood [lying]; *and as with a chariot-rope drag along Sin: that say, Let them make haste, let Him hasten His work that we may see: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know.*

When, in the past history of Israel and of Christendom, has not iniquity like Juggernaut in his car, been drawn onward by striving, toiling multitudes, who yet count their toilsome, slavish labour, joy. Their instru-

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ments, their "cords" are lies and falsity. The history of the past has been the history of human energy devoting itself, with deceptiveness and falsehood for its instruments, to the interests of SIN: but there is yet before us a period of matured apostasy when men more than ever will give their energies, body and soul, to the service of iniquity, and will scoffingly mock at the threatenings of God, saying, "Let Him hasten His work that we may see, and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know." The notion that such passages as these have been finally accomplished in the past judgments that have fallen on Israel, has utterly blinded us as to the awful future, and led us to speak of peace and prosperity when judgment is nigh at hand.

VERSE 20.

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil, putting darkness for light, and light for darkness, putting bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.

Woe unto them that call evil good &c.] When the last great Apostate shall "think to change times and laws," and "establish mischief as by a law," bitter will emphatically be put for sweet, and sweet for bitter. But we should greatly deceive ourselves if we imagined that this habit is one that pertains only to the hour when evil culminates. It characterizes, more or less, the whole course of human history, and was never, perhaps, more discernible than at this present hour. Indeed,

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whenever the presence of light makes it needful for men to find some excuse for rejecting it and choosing darkness, they will be sure to justify themselves by representing truth as falsehood, and falsehood as truth. Sacerdotalism must habitually do this; as must every system of darkness that is constructed in the proximity of light. Even in the true Church of God this tendency is fearfully manifest. Zeal for falsehood is not unfrequently honoured as if it were zeal for Truth. Whether that which is taught will, or will not bear the test of Scripture is little regarded, if only it please, or interest, or excite. Habitual opposedness to some of the most precious and most important of the truths revealed in Scripture is scarcely regarded as a blemish. Where such tendencies prevail it is impossible but that bitter must be put for sweet, and sweet for bitter: and when Antichristianism manifests itself in its fulness, it will be but the matured development of such habits in systematized combination. It would be well if the true people of God would remember that some of the most characteristic principles of Antichristianism may, in their germinant and incipient form, be by them cherished. When men justify themselves, or others, in doing officially what they would not do unofficially, we may be very sure that they fall under the condemnation of this verse.

Verse 21.

Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and in their own sight prudent.

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Of all manifestations of self-complacent pride, there is none more offensive than that of those who pretend to sit in judgment on the works of God (Holy Scripture itself not excluded) and to be wise enough to elect out of *all* things that which they deem to be good, and to reject that which they think worthless. This is the vain and impious profession of all eclectic philosophy. In ancient times, and now again in Germany and in England, it has ventured even to criticize and sit in judgment on God. There are few things more revolting than the self-complacent conceit of the neologian writers in England. Never was there a class of men to which the woe of this verse more distinctly pertains.

Verses 22 and 23.

Woe to the men mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink, justifying the wicked for the sake of a bribe, and the righteousness of the righteous they take from him.

Men have recourse to wine, and to such joys as wine symbolizes, either for the sake of mere exhilaration, that they may "drink and forget their poverty, and remember their misery no more:" or else (which is far worse) that they may deaden conscience, and brace themselves up to deeds of violence and iniquity. In a previous verse, wine is referred to as used by those who seek after godless merriment; in the verse before us it is otherwise. "Justifiers of the wicked, and condemners of the just" are they who mingle the cup of strong drink—evidently

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that they may encourage and strengthen themselves for the service of iniquity. There are ever some who like Balaam love those "wages" which cannot be obtained save by the service of unrighteousness. The world loves its own, and will only reward those who will habitually serve it and its methods. There are other bribes than silver and gold. Influence, station, official dignity, and the like, are potent bribes; and Satan knows how to use them so as to encourage his servants in crushing Truth and upholding falsehood. They who do these things may not mingle strong drink literally, but surely it must be needful for them to keep themselves well occupied with the pleasures and busy interests of life, lest peradventure they should look forward into the future and apprehend the truth of a judgment to come.

Verse 24.

Therefore as flame [literally, *a tongue of fire*] *devoureth stubble, and as dry grass kindled* [literally, *dry grass of flame*] *falleth* [so] *their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall as dust go up, for they have rejected the law of Jehovah of Hosts, and the saying of the Holy One of Israel they have despised.*

Their root shall be as rottenness &c.] This verse evidently refers to the great day of visitation when the unrepentant evil of earth will be met by the Jehovah of Israel in all the terrors of His holiness. "Judgment will he lay to the line, and righteousness to the

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plummet." Refuges of lies, ecclesiastical or philosophic, will not avail *then*.

VERSE 25.

Therefore hath burned the wrath of Jehovah against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and smitten them: and the mountains trembled, and their carcase became as refuse in the midst of the streets. For all this his wrath hath not turned back, but still is his hand stretched out.

Therefore hath burned &c.] The incipient judgments which have already fallen on Israel are here referred to. But however heavy, they are but the αρχη ωδινων —"the beginning of sorrows;" the sequel is yet to come.

VERSES 26 TO 30.

And he will raise up a signal to the Gentiles from afar, and will hiss for him [the nations individualized and regarded as one with reference probably to the embodiment of their power under the one Antichrist] *from the ends of the earth: and, behold, in haste swift shall he come: there is no faint-one, and no stumbling-one among them;* [literally, *in him*—the enemy individualized] *he* [the enemy still individualized] *sleeps not and slumbers not; and the girdle of his loins is not loosed, and the latchet of his sandals is not broken: whose arrows are sharpened and all his bows bent* [trodden], *the hoofs of his horses like flint are reckoned, and his wheels like a*

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whirlwind. He hath a roar like a lioness, and he shall roar like the young lions, and shall growl and seize the prey and secure it, and there shall be none to deliver. And he [the enemy] *shall roar against him* [Israel] *in that day like the roaring of the sea, and he shall gaze on the Land and behold darkness. Anguish and light! It is dark in the clouds thereof.*

And he will raise up a signal to the Gentiles from afar &c.] How contrasted this with that subsequent period "when He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." Glory *then* shall dwell in Immanuel's Land. The gathering here described of this last great confederacy of nations against Israel (the last, I mean, in this present dispensation) is again and again referred to in Scripture. See, for example, Joel ii., where (as in this passage) supernatural powers of endurance and invulnerability are ascribed to them. They will be gathered, we are told in Rev. xvi., by "spirits of devils working miracles." How supernatural and hellish the power is with which they will be invested, may be learned from the awful symbols employed to denote it in Rev. ix. 17. There never will be a more marvellous example of men being animated by and used by demons. The form of development will be human, but the hidden spring of the energy, *Satanic*. Sustained and guided by this power, the mighty hosts of ἡ οικουμενη, gathered to Armageddon, will first trample down Immanuel's

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Land and Jerusalem, and crush it, and afterwards, seeking to blot out the name of Israel utterly (see Psalm lxxxiii.), will suddenly meet the glory of the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and defy it and perish.

And he [the enemy] *shall roar against him* [Israel] *in that day like the roaring of the sea.*] Compare Isaiah xvii. 12—14.

"Ah! [or hark] the multitude of many peoples!
Like the roar of the ocean they roar.
And [hark] the rush of nations!
Like the rushing of mighty waters they rush.
The nations like the rushing of many waters shall rush:
But He shall rebuke it,
And it shall flee far away,
And be chased,
Like the chaff of mountains before a wind,
And like a rolling thing before the whirlwind.
At evening time
Behold TERROR;
Before the morning
HE IS NOT.
This is the portion of them that rob us,
And the lot of them that spoil us."

He shall gaze upon the Land, and behold darkness—anguish and light. It is dark in the clouds thereof.] There is no darkness in the Land when Antichrist first sweeps over it with his mighty hosts, and pours them

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like a raging torrent (see Joel ii. and iii.) into the valley of Jehoshaphat. The sun will shine as it is wont, and the heavens, tranquil and serene as ever, will give their accustomed light. No fear, no dread of danger, no thought of any thing but triumph, shall be in the proud heart of the enemy. He will stand as a King of kings at the head of hosts mightier and more terrible than had ever yet been congregated during the whole course of the Day of Man,—and who can withstand him? But suddenly, as in a moment, the land of Israel shall be hidden from his sight. He shall gaze on it, and "behold darkness"—rayless darkness. The sun will cease to shine; the moon and the stars shall be darkened. All shall be black with darkness, when suddenly, and in a moment, the light of the glory of the Holy One of Israel shall be seen in the midst of it, and there shall be "anguish." They shall "wail against Him." They shall say to the mountains, "Fall on us, and to the hills, cover us." Luke xxiii. 30. "The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God." His saints, rising from their graves in glory, and gathered together by holy angels, shall be caught up to meet Him in the air, and shall accompany him as he descends to earth and takes his stand upon the Mount of Olives, thence to exercise the appointed judgment on "the adversaries." "Assemble yourselves, and come all ye Gentiles (גוים) and gather yourselves together round about—thither cause THY MIGHTY ONES to come down, O JEHOVAH." Joel iii. 11. This

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wondrous glory—the light of Heaven's own glory—will thus suddenly appear in the midst of that horror of darkness—and will intensify the anguish. There shall be "anguish and light;" for the light of glory shall be to them a consuming fire. The darkness may terrify, but the light will destroy. "The Light of Israel shall be for a fire, and His Holy One for a flame."

"Terrified in Zion are the sinners: trembling hath taken hold upon the polluted. Who among us shall dwell with [find protection in] devouring fire; who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Isaiah xxxiii. 14. Well then can we understand the connection between "anguish and light." The time for the fulfilment of these things is drawing nigh.

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THOUGHTS ON ISAIAH VI.

WHATEVER the increase of evil—howsoever light may become buried in darkness, yet the faithful hand of God never ceases to work on behalf of His Truth and His people. As there is always a remnant over whom He watches, so there is always some spot in earth where His hand distinctly operates for blessing. Its operation may be hidden as with Joseph in the prison; or as with Moses whilst feeding Jethro's flock in the wilderness; or as with David whilst hiding in the cave of Adullam; or it may be manifested in its might as when Moses stood before Pharaoh; or when Elijah confronted Ahab. The wise in heart ever seek to discover where the operation of God's present power is. There faith finds its occupation; there hope seeks its encouragement. Where God's Truth is, there is He. The place in which Truth travails and suffers (and it must travail and suffer till the Day of man ends) is the place to which the wise in heart will gather. Employments and consolations are there, for which elsewhere they will seek in vain.

Isaiah had early said, "Except Jehovah of Hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah."

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To that remnant he himself belonged, and therefore he was under the preserving care of the great Shepherd of Israel for ever. But more was granted to him than this. He was not only to be preserved from the evil, he was to be strengthened also for honoured service against it. He was to uphold the banner of Truth against the foe, and they whose hearts were tender and had ears to hear, were to receive from him light, encouragement, and guidance. The priest in Israel might cease to instruct in the Truth, the king might no longer rule in the fear of God, but the Prophet remained. His service indeed might be, and was despised, and his word slighted, yet the power of the Lord was there, and "the poor of the flock" recognised it—sought unto it, and were blessed. The very increase of the darkness was made by God the occasion of granting unto His servants, the Prophets, fresh mercies—new and fuller manifestations of His glory and love. So was it with Isaiah in the chapter before us: so was it afterwards with John in Patmos. Sure tokens of declension and decay had manifested themselves in the Apostolic Churches when John saw in vision the eternal throne and its glory. Corruption had yet more manifestly fastened upon Israel when Isaiah beheld the vision recorded in this chapter. The mission both of Isaiah and of John as Prophets, was founded on the dispensational failure of the bodies to which they respectively belonged. They stood in the midst of those bodies as the accredited witnesses of God, and their message was a message of woe, their service a service

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of sorrow. So was it with all the Prophets. "Take, my brethren, the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience. Behold, we count them happy that endure." They stood in the midst of abounding and advancing evil: and they were placed there in order that they might bear testimony AGAINST it. "Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the Priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee." Jer. i. 17. Such was the character of the place in which all the Prophets stood. It was a place of honour, but it was one of sorrow; and they were not unconscious of its bitterness. "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and of contention to the whole earth! . . . . . every one of them doth curse me." Jer. xv. 10. "Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?" Jer. xx. 18. The Prophets drank of a bitter cup, and were not unconscious of its bitterness.

They needed, therefore, consolation. Wine is for them that are heavy of heart. They required it; and it was not withheld. Peculiar mercies were vouchsafed to them. They were enabled to apprehend with in-

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creased distinctness the holiness and glory of God, and to appreciate the honoured place assigned to them as His servants in the great conflict between good and evil. Whilst others were departing into further distance, they were brought into nearer communion with Him and with His ways. They were called to walk WITH Him through the darkness: light was shed upon their present path: visions of glory illumined the future: they were comforted themselves, and they were empowered to comfort and to guide others. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." Here was at once their solace and their honour. They were, and still are the comforters of the remnant whom grace preserves. I say, still are, for, great as was the light shed by them on the times of their own personal ministrations, the future is the period on which the great burden of their testimony bears. Theirs is a continuing and an increasingly developed light sent to guide on to the brightness of the perfect day, and they who walk in it know its blessedness. It is to them, what light was to Israel in the day when Egypt was darkened. "There was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days: they saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings." Is there no joy, no comfort in light thus distinctively vouchsafed of God—light sent to shine in the midst of deepening darkness in order that it may guide through it? Let us take heed that we despise not so great a blessing.

At the very moment then when intense moral dark-

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ness was settling in upon the people at large—when "their hearts were to be made fat, and their ears heavy," Isaiah was permitted to behold the glory of the Lord in a manner in which it had never yet (if we except the days of Moses) been seen in the midst of Israel. There had indeed been, when Solomon dedicated the Temple, a marvellous display of the Divine glory, but Solomon did not behold Jehovah Himself, nor see His throne, nor see Seraphim, or hear their cry, nor was the voice of Jehovah heard by him communicating its present will, and raising also the vail from the far distant future. But all this, and more than this, was granted to Isaiah. "In the year of the death of the king Uzziah I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filling the Temple. Seraphim were standing above him: each one had six wings; with twain he covereth his face, and with twain he covereth his feet, and with twain he doth fly. And they cried one to another, and said; Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of Hosts: the fulness of the whole earth [i.e. that which filleth the whole earth] is His glory. And shook the foundations of the thresholds at the voice that cried, and the house was filled with smoke."

Such was the vision of the glory and holiness of Him whom, though still present and still acting in the midst of Israel, Israel had despised and forsaken. They were unconscious of His presence: they recognised not either His glory or His holiness. Although the Temple trembled at His voice, although the Seraphim covered their

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faces as they cried, "Holy, holy, holy," yet Israel, a people laden with iniquity—whose sins were as scarlet, trembled not at all. They felt no awe—no contrition. They had learned to call evil good, and good evil. They gloried in the very things which were bringing down on them the judgments of God; and when reproved, their answer was, "In what have we trespassed so much against thee?"

Yet in the midst of this intensity of darkness that was thus settling in upon His people, God kindled the new light that was now sent through His servant, the Prophet. The instruments whom God uses, are by Him prepared. Isaiah was brought into His presence in order that he might be humbled, as well as comforted and instructed. He had not been unconscious of Israel's transgressions. He had long known them, mourned over them, and borne witness against them. Nor had he been ignorant of his own iniquity. Yet when the apprehension of his own uncleanness, and of the uncleanness of his people was brought suddenly to bear upon him in the presence of the light of the holiness of God, his first cry was one of bitter anguish. It might almost be supposed that he never recognised his sin before: nor had he ever recognised it in the manner in which he then recognised it. The vividness of truthful apprehensions in the presence of perfectness of light, makes previous dim and imperfect apprehensions seem as if they were no apprehensions at all. Therefore, the sudden and bitter cry, "Woe unto me! for I am undone; for a man of unclean lips am I, and in the midst

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of a people unclean of lips am I a dweller: for the King Jehovah of hosts mine eyes have seen."

Yet was it not well—was it not needful, that a living apprehension of the Divine holiness, in contrast with the condition of Israel's and the earth's evil, should be abidingly maintained in the heart of the Prophet? He was to stand in the midst of advancing corruptions where the conventional arrangements of men were to supersede more and more, the appointments of God; where falsehood was to usurp the place of Truth, and iniquity the place of Righteousness, until at last, wickedness should be established as by a law. It is not easy to retain a sense of the glory of the unseen Throne amidst the glare of the many fires kindled to illumine by their deceiving brightness the Day of man; nor to retain an apprehension of holiness and truth amidst the corruptions and falsehoods by which Satan seduces and deludes. They who dwell in the midst of evil, even though they witness against it, are always in danger of estimating the rightness of their position by considering, not so much its nearness to light, as its supposed distance from evil. The degree of distance, though slight, may yet seem great in our eyes. We soon magnify our devotedness, and become self-complacent; and the self-complacent in heart being neither trustful nor humble, cannot walk in communion with God. The meek and the poor in spirit, and the mourners, are they whom He has pronounced blessed. "He resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." Not in vain, therefore, did the Seraphim cry in the ears of

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Isaiah, "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts." Like words were repeated in the ears of John. Rev. iv. They who were to serve and testify in the midst of the advancing corruption of earth, needed to carry with them into their sphere of service, a living apprehension of the holiness of Him whom they served.

But holiness cannot be apprehended in peace apart from SACRIFICE. The feeling that Isaiah had respecting his uncleanness and unworthiness was no vain imagination. The estimate he had formed of his condition was no false estimate. He *was* a man of unclean lips, and in the midst of a people of unclean lips he was a dweller; and it was meet that he should know this and feel it. But the place in which he received and learned this lesson was THE TEMPLE; and in the court of the Temple stood THE ALTAR of burnt-offering; and on that Altar holy fire burned; and that fire was no ordinary fire, for it had fed on SACRIFICE. Fire, simply as fire, is the emblem of the consuming power of unappeased holiness. As such it burns in unmitigated fierceness against all uncleanness, and therefore would have so burned against Isaiah. But fire, taken from the Altar where it had fed gratefully on SACRIFICE, is the emblem of holiness *satisfied*—satisfied because of all its righteous requirements having been adequately met, so that it is set free to act in the power of grace, and love, and salvation. And this was the power brought to bear on Isaiah. As soon as "the live coal taken from the altar" had touched his lips, it could be said unto him, "Lo, this hath touched

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thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin expiated." His uncleanness was remembered no more: it was not imputed: and all because of the efficacy of that (then pre-figured but now) accepted sacrifice, whereby cleanness according to the cleanness of the sanctuary attaches, and that for ever, to all whom the power of *appeased* holiness reaches.

Isaiah, as soon as he had been touched by "the live coal from the altar," was made meet for the presence, and for the service of Him before whose glory he had trembled. As soon, therefore, as he heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" he instantly replied, "Here am I; send me." All sense of distance was removed. God's love had associated him with Himself. He was to be a witness for God in the earth—a witness for Truth, whose sufferings he was to share. He was to bear forth a light into the midst of the coming darkness, which that darkness should never quench. It is a light that burns brightly still, and so shall continue till it mingles with the light of the perfect day. And there are some (as there shall be even till the end) whose hearts greet it and find in it a light that guides them in paths of separateness and peace. Isaiah, therefore, was not comfortless. He had an honoured service, and he knew it. He was conscious of being brought into association with Him whose glory he had beheld. He went forth from the presence of the God of Israel—the God of glory, to be His witness.

Yet the message he was sent to bear was a bitter

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message—a message of woe and of judgment. "Go, and say to this people, Hear indeed, but understand not; and see indeed, but perceive not. Make fat the heart of this people, and its* ears make heavy, and its eyes close; lest it see with its eyes, and with its ears hear, and its heart understand, and it turn, and one heal it." Such was the awful message. It was the announcement of the coming of judicial blindness. Light such as never yet had visited earth was to be sent into their midst; and they were to behold it, but not to perceive. A message of mercy, the like to which had never yet reached the ears of man, was to be sent amongst them, and they were to hear it, but not to understand. They had scorned their past mercies—had forsaken and rebelled against Him who gave them—had refused to own evil as evil, and good as good—had despised reproof, and hardened themselves against chastisement, and now, although that very Person to whom the Seraphim had cried, "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts," was about to veil His glory, and to humble Himself to become man, and to come amongst them as the Minister of grace, and finally to be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and although the Holy Ghost also was to be sent from heaven to testify to the value of His atoning blood, and although signs and wonders such as they had never before seen were in His name to be wrought amongst them in attestation to His risen glory, yet

* Its, i.e. the people's: the singular being used to denote the more forcibly, the unity of their action as if that of an individual.

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they, seeing these things were not to perceive, and hearing were not to understand. Twice subsequently are these awful words used of Israel. They are used by John when he records Israel's final rejection of the personal ministry of the Lord Jesus (John xii. 38); and they are used also by the great Apostle of the Gentiles when he delivered his last recorded message to Israel. "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing, ye shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing, ye shall see and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Acts xxviii. 25. Three times, therefore, when the Apostle thus spake, had these words been verified in the history of Israel. They had heard and rejected the Prophets: they had heard and rejected Jesus: they had heard and rejected the Apostles. They are hearing and rejecting still.

Yet awful as the announcement of this coming blindness was, its announcement was a mercy. Even if the blindness had been sent without warning, it would have been but the infliction of a penalty well deserved. But warning was given. And what should have been the result? Should they not have humbled themselves and made confession, and deprecated the threatened infliction? Should they not have bowed before the terrible announcement and viewed it in the light in which their

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conscience must (or should) have set it before them? But, as it had been with all previous warnings, so was it with this warning also. It was despised. The last great day will sufficiently prove that they did what they did against light—light which their consciences either did apprehend, or should have apprehended: so that they were without excuse. They were destroyers of themselves. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." On them the responsibility of their self-destruction rests.

Yet Israel were not to be cast off for ever. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; BUT IN ME IS THINE HELP." Hosea xiii. 9. This Isaiah knew. The remembrance was treasured in his heart; it was a thought ever present to his soul. Therefore, he quickly said, "How long, O Lord?" How long shall this blindness rest on those whom thou hast chosen to be thy people? The answer was that judgment should first work its work, and the land be made utterly desolate. "And I said, how long, O Lord? And he said, Until desolate be the cities for want of an inhabitant, and the houses for want of men, and the ground be utterly waste, and Jehovah shall far away have removed man, and great be the forsaking in the midst of the land." This we have seen. Assyria commenced—Rome completed the desolation. But now we see symptoms of revival. The Land of Israel, like other Eastern lands, is gradually becoming reached by European civilization. It is being prepared for re-occupation by its people. A portion of them—"a tenth," shall return, and by them Israel

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shall again be nationally represented in their Land. But they shall return to be consumed. "Yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and be for consuming," i.e. by judgment. They will find that the "days of vengeance" are not yet ended: they will prove that "the fire of Jehovah is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem." "Thus saith the Lord God; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you." Ezekiel xxii. 19—22. Nevertheless, He will not make a full end. "As a terebynth tree, and an oak," when they shed their leaves, have in them a vitality, dormant it may be, but not destroyed so there shall be a holy elect seed which shall be its [the Land's] substance. The terebynth tree and the oak, though they cast their leaves, have yet in them a hidden principle of life whereby they become again clothed with verdure. So shall it be with that Land and people. An elect seed shall be there, and shall be the substance and vitality thereof, and Israel, however denuded for a season, shall at last blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit. "Ye, O mountains of Israel, ye

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shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel. . . . . And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded . . . . . and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings." Ezekiel xxxvi. 8—11. "And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden. . . . . Then the Gentiles that are left round about you shall know that I the Lord buiid the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it." Ezekiel xxxvi. 35, 36.

Blessed prospects these! But we must not forget that before this, there will be the return of Israel "*to be consumed.*" And millions from among the Gentiles will be consumed also, for they will join with Israel in apostasy, and will share their doom. The "lawlessness" which is to culminate in that apostasy, is steadily advancing, even in our favoured land. Sacerdotalism, after hardening men's hearts into scepticism, pretends to be able to resist the rising tide; but it will fail. It will only accelerate its course. Men may tolerate for expediency's sake the cleverness by which untruthfulness vindicates its sophistry, or may sanction the histrionic and æsthetic displays by which they may seem religious whilst they are amusing themselves; but in their hearts they venerate neither the sophisms of the sacerdotalist, nor the follies of the Church-actor, but utterly despise both. Whenever they who profess to be God's

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ministers cause themselves to be mistrusted and despised by sinning against principles which "nature itself" teaches, we may be very sure that a crisis of infidelity is near at hand.* Long has it been true of Christendom, Seeing, ye see but perceive not: hearing, ye hear but understand not. The result of this long rejection of light, both by Israel and by Christendom, will soon be seen in the alacrity with which multitudes out of Christendom and out of Israel will give themselves over, body and soul, to the last great lie of Satan.

Blessed are they who read aright the signs of the times, and who are, through God's grace, brought into a place of separateness analogous to that in which Isaiah stood. The live coal from the altar of burnt-offering which touched the lips of Isaiah has touched us also. We too can say, "Our iniquity is gone, our sin expiated." We are brought under the same redemption and under the same love—to us more fully unfolded, and its methods more clearly revealed, because JESUS has now come, and the Spirit as the

* Thus the *Saturday Review* says; "There is a gulph between the clerical mind and the ordinary *male* mind which is deep and daily deepening. On the one side it is a *pity* akin to contempt, *too apathetic to form itself into words;* on the other there are pious hands uplifted in meek spitefulness."

The *Christian Spectator* says; "In our times there is much reserve and much dissimulation. All who know religious society know that the people are greatly deluded as to the real opinions of their ministers. There is a fear of the Jews which leads men to hide their profound convictions, and temporize with the multitude. Silence, prevarication, compromise, false subscription—all these sins are common among us."—(*July*, 1862.)

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Paraclete been sent to cause us to know the things that have freely been given to us of God. Should Isaiah then be separate, and we not separate? We are not indeed Prophets as he, but we have committed to us the very light that his hand bore; and other light through Apostles and Prophets, subsequently sent, has been added. Have we then no Lamp to carry forth into the midst of the darkness? The darkness of which Isaiah spake was to him distant. Its incipient tokens only, were to him nigh. But to us it is near. How then ought we to prize and cleave to light which is specifically intended for that hour of intensified darkness, the shadow of which is, even now, beginning to cast its gloom over us!

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NOTES ON ISAIAH VI.

Verse 1.

In the year of the death of king Uzziah, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filling the temple.

I saw the Lord seated on a throne.] Compare Rev. iv. "Behold there was a throne set in heaven, and on the throne One seated." Heaven, not earth, was the place where John beheld the Divine glory; for the Temple of Israel, where Isaiah saw it, had been left desolate. "Behold, your House is left unto you desolate." The glory once present in the earth had been withdrawn and was hidden in the heavens, as it still is, though in due season to return. See Ezekiel xliii. 2.

The vision granted to John was far fuller than that seen by Isaiah; for Isaiah lived before the work of redemption had been wrought out, and therefore the time was not come for the fulness of its results to be declared. Consequently, around the Throne, *as seen by Isaiah*, were no symbolic Cherubim, no enthroned crowned Elders, symbolizing the place soon to be occupied by the redeemed in glory. The holiness of the God of Israel in contrast with the uncleanness of those who professed to be His people, was the thought in-

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tended to be pressed home on the heart of Isaiah; and he trembled. Yet his terror was but for a moment. Grace caused him to apprehend his relation to the Throne in peace through the power of atoning sacrifice, and John himself, notwithstanding his far greater light and knowledge, had no better title than Isaiah to say that his iniquity was "gone, and his sin atoned for." Christ was "the Lamb foreordained," and the same love that afterwards enfolded John enfolded Isaiah, though the time was not yet come to explain and develop all its fulness. There was an essential similarity between these two honoured servants of God in this, as well as in the character of their message. They both stood under the same grace, and served in the same service. The message they were respectively commissioned to bear was to them both, a "bitter" message. Isaiah was sent to prophesy against Israel—John was sent to prophesy "against (επι) many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." See Rev. x. 11. But they were not sent forth on this ministry of sorrow without the assured comfort of knowing their own association in mercy and in love with Him who sat on the Throne—whose servants and witnesses they were. If others were about to withdraw further and further from the light and to bury themselves in intensified darkness, yet *they* were to know Him more and more, and to prove in manifold ways the faithfulness as well as the greatness of His mercies. Isaiah might have the Spirit given to him as the Spirit of *servantship* (πνευμα δουλειας), and John as the Spirit of filial-condition (υιοθε-

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σιας), yet servants can love, and sons can serve. The light and the knowledge of John was greater than that of Isaiah, just as the fulness of noontide light is greater than that of earlier hours; yet the difference is not a difference of kind, but of degree. Their *title* to glory rested not upon their degree of light, nor on the character of their service, nor on the extent of their knowledge of, and communion with, the things that had been, or were to be, given through or in Christ. Their title to *all* blessing (for he that hath Christ hath all things) rested not on anything imparted or communicated to them: it rested on something altogether external to themselves, even the merits of their God and Saviour, and these could only become theirs *by imputation.* All who ever have, or ever shall stand under the sacrificial excellency of the service of Immanuel finished on the Cross, have "all things." In Him both Isaiah and John had eternal life; in Him they were chosen before the world was; and even as they trod on earth a common path of suffering, so they shall also know communion in glory. They both alike can say, "To him that loveth us—and freed us from our sins by his own blood, and made for us a sovereignty—priests unto his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."*

[The unity of the redeemed *in glory* is one of the most precious of the truths of Scripture. How con-

* See Greek text as edited by Tregelles.

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trasted such unity with the many differences, dispensational and personal, that have been known among the redeemed *in earth!* To be excluded from that one body of which Christ is the Head, as well as the Saviour (see Eph. v. 23), is to be lost. The Scripture knows of no redemption that does not in result involve union with the Person of the Redeemer. What then shall we say of a doctrine, which, whilst it admits that Abraham and the Old Testament saints are redeemed, excludes them, nevertheless, from the Church, and from the Church's glory?

Is the Scripture false when it tells us that they who are Christ's have *all things?*" (1 Cor. iii. 21—23.) Is not Abraham Christ's? How is it then that he has not *all things?*

Again, we read, "He that spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Was not Abraham one of those for whom Christ was given? How then can he be excluded from the "all things" freely given?

Separation from Abraham in the ages to come is perdition. To be separated from him and the promises made to him, is separation from Christ and the promises made to Christ. "To Abraham and his Seed (i.e. Christ) were THE PROMISES made." Gal. iii. 16. Mark well the expression, "THE PROMISES." It is an expression so wide as to include every blessing in earth or heaven that ever has, or ever shall come to that one family of which Christ is at once the Redeemer and

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the Head. But THE PROMISES were not made to Abraham apart from Him who was to be the meritorious Procurer of them, i.e. Christ. "To Abraham and his seed were THE PROMISES made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Gal. iii. 16. Now suppose we dissociate ourselves from Abraham, and cut ourselves off from these promises made to him and to his seed, what remains to us but wrath? Are any promises of any kind whatsoever made to us apart from Christ? The great struggle of the Apostle Paul was to show, not that Abraham was the heir of *all* the promises, but to prove that we, dogs from the Gentiles, were admitted into strict fellowship with him in them. This, even Peter and Barnabas practically denied at Antioch. See, therefore, the strength of the words of Paul. "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith [we *Gentile* believers are especially, though not exclusively referred to here], the same are the children of Abraham. [Whatever blessing we have, or may have, we have in that character.] And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles [τα εθνη, ourselves, believers from among the Gentiles] by faith afore preached the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. [That is, we, the present election out of the Gentiles are only blessed in virtue of the promises made to Abraham.] So then they that be of faith are blessed [not apart from, but] WITH faithful Abraham." See Gal. iii. 7—9. And again, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and

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heirs according to the promise"—a verse which distinctly proves that heirship under the promise made to Abraham is heirship of all things—for they who are Christ's have "all things." Invalidate then the title of Abraham, and what becomes of our own? There is certainly not one blessing in the ages to come that we can have apart from Abraham. If we exclude ourselves from the circle of his blessedness, we exclude ourselves from Christ, and from all blessing. There is not one result of the redemption perfected by Christ that is not included in the promises made to Abraham. No one, I suppose, will affirm that Abraham, "the father of the faithful," received the promises for his children only, and that he himself is excluded! That would imply that Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and David, and ourselves (for we all are through faith Abraham's children) are heirs of the promises, and that Abraham *only* is excluded.

They who teach this doctrine are necessarily obliged to derogate from, and therefore to dishonour the work of Christ by taking from it that which the Scripture ascribes to it, and to it alone. For when it is asked, why Abraham, and David, and Daniel, on whom (no less than on ourselves) rests the full value of Christ's most precious blood, are to be excluded from the Church, and the Church's glory, the answer is, "Because they, while on earth, did not receive the baptism of the Spirit as we; and none except those who receive the Holy Ghost in that special character in which He is now dispensationally sent as the Paraclete, belong to the Church

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either in earth *or heaven.*" Such is the answer. If this were true, we should indeed have to teach another Gospel—one that the Scripture knows not. We should no longer be able to define the Church as the Scripture defines it, viz., as being that which the Lord* "has purchased by His own blood"—words which would not have been used if redemption did not define the limits of the Church, and if in eternity, "the Church" and "the redeemed" were not co-extensive and convertible terms. Shall we indeed say that the Church is founded not on Christ, but on the Spirit as dispensationally given? Would not this be another Gospel?

The teaching of the word of God is far different from this. It teaches that God hath laid in Zion "a chief corner stone, elect, precious," and adds, "to you that believe, that preciousness pertains." [*ὑμιν ουν ἡ τιμη τοις πιστευουσιν.* 1 Pet. ii. 6.] They who believe not are not on it, and are lost: but all who believe are on it, and are not only saved, but its preciousness is the measure of their preciousness in the sight of

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* The reading in this passage, which seems to have the weight of evidence in its favour (see Tregelles) is *ποιμαινειν την εκκλησιαν του κυριου*—"to feed the Church of the LORD which he purchased by his own blood." If we follow this reading, I should regard *κυριος* as equivalent to JEHOVAH, and *εκκλησια κυριου* to answer to the expression frequently used in the Old Testament קהל יהוה; Sept. *εκκλησια κυριου.* "*Assembly of Jehovah.*" See Deut. xxiii. 1, 2, 3, 8, and Micah ii. 5. Compare also יהוה עדת; Sept. *συναγωγη κυριου.* Numbers xxvii. 17, xxxi. 16. Josh. xxii. 17, and the words *τον λογον τον κυριου* frequently used in the Acts.

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God. How then can we rend asunder any whom grace brings upon it? Is Christ divided? This is that Rock on which Jesus said He would build His Church. "On this rock (myself) I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." These words are limited to no mere earthly dispensational condition of the Church. They point to eternity. They point to that yet future hour when the Church shall no longer be as now in process of being builded, but when it *shall have been* builded and presented in its completeness—a spiritual House bright in unearthly glory. From Abel downwards, the spiritual stones have been in process of preparation, though the foundation-stone was not laid until Christ came. The object of His words to Peter was not to ignore all that had been previously done in the way of preparation, but to declare the great truth that He, and He alone, was the foundation. The preparation of the stones is one very material part of the process of construction. No little labour had been expended in digging them out of the quarry to which naturally they belonged. Abraham was one of these stones: Peter was another. The same Rock that made Simon what he was as a *Rock-man* (the meaning of Πετρος as distinguished from πετρα, a rock) gave to Abraham also the same standing in eternal strength. They will both be seen as "living stones" in the spiritual building when the hour of its completion and manifestation in glory shall have come. And although, after Christ had manifested Himself as the foundation, the spiritual stones were brought into a

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unity and into a relation to Him and to one another that prefigured (in a manner that never previously had been) their final unity in glory, yet how has this condition of the Church been by sin and Satan changed! "The gates of Hades" might to the outward eye seem to have prevailed. But they have not prevailed. "On this Rock," said Jesus, "*I will build* my Church," i.e. I will go on building it, whatever may oppose, until all shall be finished. Accordingly, the building still advances. Stones are still being prepared, and fashioned, and squared, and polished. The unity of the redeemed, though hindered in its manifestation, is not destroyed. They have through the Spirit a relation to God, and to Christ, and to one another, that no circumstances—no power of Satan can subvert. Satan may prevail against them for a season in the earth, but he cannot prevail against them in the Heavens. It is for Heaven the Church is destined: there it is to shine in its lustre: there it is to be known as the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. There was an hour when (the building of the typical temple having been completed) Solomon could say, "I HAVE SURELY BUILT for thee a house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever." 1 Kings viii. 13. So also the hour will come when Christ, ceasing to say, "I *will* build,"* will say instead

* The future tense, both in the Old and New Testament, is frequently used to denote a course of action that has been commenced, and is in a state of progression. Thus, although God had already justified multitudes, and was daily justifying more, the Apostle, nevertheless, uses the *future* tense, and says, "There

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thereof, "I *have* built." The spiritual building will be completed, and the foundation on which it rests will be known and recognised by all as being Christ *alone*.

Heaven, be it remembered, is not to be a transcript of the dispensational differences of earth. There is a power of unity in Christ, paramount to all the temporary dispensational distinctions that have been found amongst His people in the earth, and that power will finally be put forth in all its strength, and will bring all who are in Him into unhindered participation of His "fulness." "Out of His fulness have all we re-

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is one God who *shall justify* the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith." Rom. iii. 30. These words do not imply that none had been already justified, but the course of justifying action had not been completed towards all who were to be brought under it, and therefore the future tense is used. See also Romans v. 19. "As by the disobedience of one man many were constituted sinners, so by the obedience of One *SHALL* many *BE* constituted righteous." The future is used because the course of action spoken of is continuous and not concluded. "The Future," says Winer, "in expressing general truths sometimes very nearly assumes the import of the present." It is applied to "a rule *that continues to be in force*"—"a rule established by God." See Winer, Part III., § XL. In Hebrew the use of the future in expressing continuousness of action is constant. "In his [Jehovah's] law he will meditate," i.e. He will continue to meditate day and night. This is especially the case when a course of events avowedly successional is spoken of. Thus in Dan. vii. 17. "These great beasts which are four, are four kings, which *shall arise* (יָקוּמוּן) out of the earth." The future tense is used, although the first of the beasts had already arisen: but the whole series was not complete.

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ceived, and grace following upon* grace," are words which, though true in earth, will be much more consciously realized and appreciated in heaven. Before the world was, all the elect were chosen in Christ, and unity of blessing predestinatively given to them in Him. "Whom he did predestinate, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified"—and that, with like glory, for it is expressly said to be in joint-heirship with Christ (Rom. viii. 17), and in association "with" Him (verse 17), and in His likeness—"conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the first-born among many brethren." This is said to be the appointment of God to all His children. "If children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." The Apostle expressly tells us in the Galatians that the Old Testament saints were "children" and "heirs." Are they heirs without an inheritance? No. They are not heirs without an inheritance. The predestinated are called, and the called are justified, and the justified are glorified. Such is the golden chain which God has, in the sovereignty of His grace, drawn around all His chosen people. Time reveals what eternity has bestowed. The process of unfolding is indeed gradual, and thus many profitable lessons are learned: but the elect of later dispensations have the comfort of knowing, that there is not one of their endowments in Christ that will not, in the eternal ages,

* Like wave following wave in constant successive flow—*κυμα αντι κυματος*, wave upon wave, a frequent meaning of *αντι*. As one wave goes, another succeeds into its place.

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be participated in by their brethren who have preceded them in the path of faith. Abraham will not *in eternity* have less knowledge of Jehovah than Moses, because God was pleased *in time* to reveal Himself as Jehovah to Moses in a manner in which He had not revealed Himself to Abraham. "God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am Jehovah; and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them." Exodus vi. 3.* So likewise, although Paul *while on earth* received the Spirit in a manner different from that in which He was received by Moses, yet Paul will not in glory be more in the power of the Spirit than Moses. Indeed, Paul himself had no title

* How little dispensational position *in the earth* has to do with the inheritance of glory in the world to come, may be seen from this, that although neither John the Baptist, nor any of the saints who preceded him, were in "the kingdom of heaven" as dispensationally formed on earth, yet they will not on that account be excluded from the kingdom *in glory*. "The kingdom of heaven" was dispensationally formed by the personal ministry of the Lord Jesus. Those consequently who preceded Him were not in it. Hence the Lord Jesus, speaking of John the Baptist, said, "The least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he:" that is, *dispensationally* and *ministerially* greater: for John the Baptist did not himself minister the Gospel of grace as Jesus and His disciples did. Nevertheless, the saints that preceded Jesus will not be shut out from the kingdom *in glory*, because they were not in it dispensationally on the earth. Jesus Himself says: "Many" (that word includes ourselves) "shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. viii. 11. Therefore, they who were not in the kingdom of heaven dispensationally here, shall be in it in its glory.

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to the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit as the Paraclete, except as coming under the covenant made with Abraham. Mark well his words to the Galatians. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that *the blessing of Abraham* might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that *we might receive the promise of the Spirit* through faith." Here we are expressly taught that we receive "*the promise of the Spirit*" as now given, because we share Abraham's blessing. Take the promise of the Spirit from Abraham, and we take it from ourselves. The promise of the Spirit is not a temporary dispensational promise merely. The Spirit will be the power of our new life in glory. Without it we could not act either here, or hereafter, as members of the body of Christ. Nevertheless, the possession of the Spirit, either as the Paraclete, or in any other way, is not that which supplies to us our *title* to membership in the body of Christ. Christ by His work in redemption supplies to us the *title*. What can be more important than for the soul to distinguish between *title* to privilege, and *ability to act* in the power of that privilege, especially when *the ability* is a result—a necessary result of the *title;* so that he who has the title, *must*, sooner or later, have the ability. Paul, the moment he said in faith, "Lord Jesus," belonged to the Church of God before he was baptized either by water, or by the Holy Ghost; although in due time he received both—not indeed to make him an heir of glory, but because he had been

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made an heir of glory, through, and in, Christ. The thief on the Cross died without receiving either the baptism of water, or the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit, yet he had *the title*, the moment he believed, to all that the covenant with Abraham had conferred; and, in glory, he shall inherit all.

There are many relations which the Spirit of God is pleased to hold towards us. He became a Spirit of testimony to us in the Prophets, and subsequently in the Apostles. In the Prophets, as well as in the Apostles (though with less fulness), He testified of the same Christ and the same redemption. Moreover, as Lydia's heart was opened by the Spirit to receive the things spoken by Paul, so, from the beginning, the Spirit of God opened the hearts of all who received the testimony respecting the promised Seed, and created in them that which is called in Scripture, "the new man," without which there could have been no faith—no fruits of righteousness—indeed nothing that was pleasing or acceptable unto God, for "the flesh profiteth nothing"—in it "no good thing dwelleth." Consequently, we know that in the Old Testament saints (seeing that they were enabled "to please God") "the new man" *must* by the Spirit have been created, quite as truly as in the saints of the present dispensation. Again, seeing that "the new man" needs to be strengthened and directed, the Spirit also comes to be a sustaining and indwelling Spirit; otherwise "the new man" would be overpowered by the strength of "the old," and no fruits would be brought forth unto

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God. The Old Testament saints, therefore, received the Spirit as truly as we, though to them He was given as the Spirit of *servantship* (δουλειας)—to us as the Spirit of *filial-condition* (υἱοθεσιας).* "We have not received the Spirit of servantship again to fear, but we have received the Spirit of son-condition, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The Old Testament saints from Sinai onwards, were placed under the Law as children are placed under a tutor or governor† during the time of their pupilage; but the very passage that teaches this, teaches us that they were *children* and *heirs*, although during the time of their pupilage they differed not from servants. "Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a ser-

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* See remarks on the meaning of υἱοθεσια in Occasional Papers, Vol. I., Number 3, page 177.

† "Schoolmaster," the word adopted in our version as the rendering of παιδαγωγος, *pædagogue*, does not adequately convey the meaning. "The pædagogus or tutor, frequently a superior slave, was entrusted with the moral supervision of the child. Thus his office was quite distinct from that of the διδασκαλος, so that the English rendering, 'schoolmaster' conveys a wrong idea. . . . . The Rabbinical writers naturalised the word παιδαγωγος, פְּדָגוֹג, and in the Jerusalem Targum, it is used to translate אֹמֵן (authorised version, a nursing father), Num. xi. 12. . . . The παιδαγωγος had the whole moral direction of the child, so that παιδαγωγια became equivalent to 'moral training,' and the idea conveyed by the term need not to be restricted to any one function." *Professor Lightfoot—Epistle to Galatians, p.* 145. It was, however, part of the duty of the παιδαγωγος to see that the child was taken to right teachers, so that the thought of instruction is not to be excluded from the general supervision to which the pædagogue was appointed.

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vant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world; but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the condition of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Gal. iv. 1—7. Can any one read these words and deny that the Old Testament saints were children as much as we; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ? Shall we dare to dissever links that God so solemnly declares that He has made fast for ever?

It has been frequently asserted, that in Scripture the Old Testament saints are nowhere called "the body of Christ." Now, even if this expression were not applied to them in Scripture, we can dispense with the expression if we can show that all the characteristics of the "one body" are declared to pertain to them in glory. There is, however, a remarkable passage in Isaiah where they are called Christ's "body." Jerusalem, as the corporate representative of Israel, is addressed, and it is said to her in words of future promise, "Thy dead shall live, my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of light, and the earth shall cast out the dead." In

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this passage the dead saints of Israel are called Christ's mystical body—"*my dead body*," and as such, they are to arise out of death, and to live. See Isaiah xxvi. 19.

Again, is Abraham, to whom circumcision was given as the seal of the covenant of promise (for circumcision was not of Moses, but of the fathers, John vii. 22)—is Abraham to have primarily "the sign and the seal" of that Covenant of blessing, and yet to be excluded from all that that sign denotes—from all that that seal pledges? Circumcision denotes separation from the flesh. It denotes severance from all that naturally characterizes us as children of "the first man, who was earthy," and indicates the attainment of a new and unearthly condition of being, such as is seen in "the Second Man,"—"the Last Adam" glorified. The bestowment of unearthly glory in a new creation was that which God pledged to Abraham when He gave to him the sign of circumcision. He thereby covenanted that He would finally, by the operation of His own faithful grace, bring Abraham, and all who had been or should be of the faith of Abraham, into that new-creation-glory into which flesh and blood cannot enter, where there is nothing according to the flesh, but where all is according to the Spirit; in other words, where all is according to Christ *glorified*. Christ *by His death and resurrection* hath secured this for all those of whom He is the Representative and Head. He has borne them through judicial death into the glory of the new creation. "He is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all

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things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell . . . . . for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are filled to the full (πεπληρωμενοι) in him who is the head of all principality and power: IN WHOM ALSO YE ARE CIRCUMCISED with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ [i.e. by a circumcision received by means of Christ]. Buried with him in baptism,* wherein also ye are risen with him through faith in the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." Col. i. 18 and ii. 9—13. Let any one ponder these

* God, by appointing Christ as our Substitute and granting us union with Him, has delivered us from the flesh, and all that was due to our sin in the flesh, so that by means of the death and resurrection of Christ we have received the circumcision made without hands. He who is one with Christ in resurrection is surely severed from the flesh. Baptism and circumcision alike indicate separation from the flesh as the result; but baptism is a much fuller type than circumcision. Circumcision does not symbolize the means by which we are separated from the flesh into a new creation; but baptism does. It points to the death and resurrection of our Substitute and Head as the means whereby this severation into glory is effected for us; for we are typically buried in the likeness of Christ's death by being placed beneath the water, and typically raised in the likeness of His resurrection when raised from the water. Nevertheless, baptism only unfolds that which is in circumcision involved; and there is no blessing pledged in baptism to the family of faith which is not equally pledged in circumcision.

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words and say whether all the anti-typically circumcised (and not to be anti-typically circumcised is to be left in the uncircumcision of our flesh and to perish) whether all the anti-typically circumcised are not by this passage declared to be *in Him* in whom as "*Head of the body the Church*" (for it is in this character that He is spoken of throughout the passage) it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell in order that they (the anti-typically circumcised) might "in Him be filled to the full." Unless then we say that Abraham was not anti-typically circumcised—unless we can show that he was left among the uncircumcised to perish, we must admit that he, and all others who are of faith, are "in," and "filled to the full in Him who is the Head of the body the Church." Can we say of such, that they are not in "the body the Church"?

When the Apostle too speaks of Christ as "the first-fruits of them *that have fallen asleep* (*των κεκοιμημενων*, see 1 Cor. xv. 20), these words emphatically designate the Old Testament saints, for *they*, not we, had fallen asleep when Christ rose. It is a description, therefore, that pertains not to us, but to them only. From other passages, however, we learn that we are not excluded from the blessedness of being able to say, that Christ is *our* "first-fruits" also: for immediately afterwards the Apostle teaches us that ALL who are Christ's at His coming, shall, at that coming, rise in the likeness of His glory. It is true of Abraham, and true of all who are in this dispensation brought to Christ, that we shall be "Christ's at His coming." It is as true, therefore, of

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Abraham as of ourselves, that "as we have borne the image of the earthy we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Is there any blessing higher—any more distinctive than this—the being raised in the likeness of Christ?

How can they who are all equally "like Him," differ in their powers of knowledge, or love, or service?* We are expressly taught that all who are Christ's at His coming, shall be raised in His likeness, and that because they are "like Him," they shall "all see Him as He is," and all "know even as they are known." They shall alike have all perfectness of love towards God, and towards one another: otherwise, they could not be all "like Christ." We are accustomed to say that "we believe in the communion of saints." Now, the communion of the saints in glory is based upon their

* There may be difference of official position, and difference of reward among the redeemed. One may be over five, another over ten cities. Some may sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel—others may stand, one on the right hand, and the other on the left of the Lord of the whole earth in His glory. In the order of the divine government there will, no doubt, be great variety of employment and position, but this does not imply that they who are thus diversely honoured are not members of the same body, or that they are personally unlike to one another.

Christ as the eternal Son is co-equal with the Father—He is "God over all blessed for ever," yet in the arrangements of the Divine government, He will finally take the second place. "Then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that did put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." Yet His essential co-equality with the Father will not be altered, because He voluntarily takes the second place in the order of governmental administration.

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common likeness unto Christ. It flows from the unity granted to them all in Him. How could there be communion between those whose sensibilities, and powers of thought and affection and feeling, were different? How could there be communion between the redeemed, if some were admitted into a circle within which others had no ability, or else were forbidden, to enter? In Heaven, we shall have no wish to narrow the circle of blessedness—no wish to occupy a sphere of thought and feeling from which Abraham, and David, and Daniel, are excluded. We shall not then desire to cavil at the truth so distinctly declared to us in Scripture, that the Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem, is "the mother *of us all.*" Gal. iv. 26.

Again, as Christ is called "the first-born from the dead" (πρωτοτοκος εκ των νεκρων. Col. i. 18. See also Rev. i. 5), so they who rise in the *first* resurrection when Christ comes, are called "*the Church of the first-born-ones*" (εκκλησια των πρωτοτοκων)—"first-born" in relation to those who, being brought into the fold of faith during the millennium, shall rise at the close of that period, when the whole Church will be complete. Consequently, all who are Christ's at His coming (and is not Abraham Christ's?) will rise at His coming, and be therefore included in the one "CHURCH of the first-born-ones." Unless we exclude Abraham from the *first* resurrection he must belong to the "*Church* of the first-born-ones."

They who reject this most blessed and vital doctrine of the unity of the redeemed in glory, are accustomed

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to say that the Church of this dispensation is in Scripture called "the mystery." Now, even if this were so, it would afford no foundation for their theory. But it is not so. Many things connected with the history, both of the Church, and of Israel, and of the nations, are called "mysteries" (one mystery is "the mystery of iniquity"): but it is not true that either the Church as a whole, or that part of it which comes within the present dispensation, is itself called either "the mystery," or "a mystery." When the Apostle, in the third of the Ephesians, speaks of the mystery that had been hid from ages and generations, but which was then (specially though not exclusively) by his ministry being made known, what does he declare the mystery to be? Does he say that it consisted in the shutting out of all the saints who have preceded us from "the one body," and from "the household of God"? He says the very reverse. He says that we of the present dispensation obtain our blessings by being incorporated into the "commonwealth" of those who had preceded us. We dogs of the Gentiles, had been "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise," but we were to be shut out no longer. We are incorporated finally and fully into the one "commonwealth" (Eph. ii. 12)—the "one body" (Eph. ii. 16)—the one "household" (Eph. ii. 19), and are builded into the one spiritual building, part of the foundations of which had been laid by the Prophets, part by the Apostles, but of which the Lord Jesus had now become the chief corner-stone, so bringing into

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association and unity the two lines of foundation. For the true commonwealth of Israel—the true possessors of the Covenants of promise, were not they who bore merely the outward name of Israel according to the flesh, but they only who were of faith, whether Jew, or whether Gentile, they, and they only, compose "the Israel of God." With them we are, through grace, incorporated in unity of everlasting blessing. This is the mystery which the second and third chapters of the Ephesians unfold. Rome's effort to nullify the tenth of Hebrews is not more daring than is the attempt made by the system we are considering, to nullify the doctrine of the second and third of the Ephesians.

The eleventh of the Hebrews has been similarly perverted. That chapter brings into blessed association of suffering-service here, and of glory hereafter, ourselves and those who have preceded us in the path of faith. We (though less faithful than they) are yet associated with those of whom the world was not worthy. We are taught that they too, like ourselves, looked for no mere earthly hope. Of Abraham it is said, that "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Heb. xi. 10. Subsequently it is said of him and of his children; "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from

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whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." Heb. xi. 13—16.

Can we with these verses before us say, that Abraham is to be excluded from that heavenly City which is the Bride of the Lamb? Are the saints of Israel to be excluded from their own Jerusalem—the New, Heavenly Jerusalem? Are the recipients of the promise to be excluded from the promise? Strange doctrine this! Why then (it may be asked), have they not received in fruition that of which they so long ago received the promise? Why is the accomplishment so long delayed? Because, says the Apostle, God has made a better provision for us than to permit that they, our elder brethren, should be perfected in glory apart from us. (χωρις ἡμων).* Can any words be devised that could declare more plainly the impossibility of severation betwixt the saints of old and ourselves? Shall we reject these words? Shall we pronounce them false?

Arguments might be almost indefinitely multiplied, but if these that have been advanced satisfy not, it would be idle to adduce others. Let it be remembered, however, that it is impossible to deny the unity of the redeemed in glory, and to hold fast the Gospel. If we rest our title to be in the Church and to have the

* See this text further considered in a tract entitled, "Old Testament Saints not excluded from the Church of God," as advertised at end of this number.

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Church's glory on anything else than on that work of redemption which the Lord of glory commenced and finished on the earth, we do reject the Gospel. Ascribe our title to be in the Church to anything else than the blood of the Lamb, and we lay another foundation than that is laid—we teach another Gospel. "They who wash their garments*—οἱ πλυνομενοι τας στολας αυτων (and we only wash them in the blood of the Lamb) have title to the Tree of Life, and to enter in through the gates into the City." That City is the Bride of the Lamb.]

Verses 2 to 4.

Seraphim were standing above him; six wings, six wings were to each; with twain he covereth his face, and with twain he covereth his feet, and with twain he doth fly. And they cried one to the other [literally, *this cried to this*], *and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts, the fulness of the whole earth* [i.e. that which filleth the whole earth] *is his glory. And there shook the foundations of the thresholds at the voice that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.*

Seraphim.] That is, "*fiery* or *burning ones*," from שָׂרַף *to burn with devouring fire, to burn consumingly*, hence applied to those parts of the sin-offering which were *burned up* without the camp. (See Lev. iv. 12.) It is contrasted with the word קָמַר which means *to*

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* Such is the correct reading.

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burn as fragrance, and is applied to the incense (see Exodus xxx. 7), and to the fat of the sin-offering as burned on the altar of burnt-offering. (See Lev. xvi. 25.)

The fiery serpents sent to destroy the murmurers in Israel were also called "seraphim" [see Num. xxi. 6], not only as being fiery in appearance, but also as being the instruments through which destructive judgment was inflicted.

"Our God is a consuming fire." The heavenly agents of His will must therefore be holy: and this the appearance of the Seraphim as "*fiery* or *burning ones*" denoted. Their position *above* the Throne, denoted apparently their relation to Heaven. The Throne was seen on earth, but the agency connected therewith, howsoever it might be employed in earth, belonged not to the earth, but to Heaven. No mere earthly agents could have this character. The concealment of their faces and of their feet may be an act of reverence towards Him to whom they cried, "Holy, holy, holy;" or it may be intended to indicate that the eye even of the servants of God, is not permitted, at present, to follow the course of the heavenly agents of His will, nor to understand their methods. How little we know of beings whose forms are from their faces to their feet "covered!"

Yet these "burning ones" whose cry unto Jehovah was, "Holy, holy, holy," and whose touch, it might be supposed, would consume the sinner, became instruments whereby pardoning mercy reached Isaiah as soon

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as the live coal taken from the altar of burnt-offering was in their hand. Propitiated holiness saveth.

Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of Hosts.] Such was the cry of the Seraphim to Him who afterwards came in the flesh, as Jesus of Nazareth. The Apostle John, quoting from this very chapter, says; "These things said Isaiah when he saw his (Christ's) glory, and spake of him." See John xii. 41. How the dogmas of Arianism, and Socinianism, and the yet more advanced and extended falsehoods of such a book as "*Ecce Homo,*" fall before such a text as this!

There are many like texts in the Old Testament. See for example, Mal. iii. 1. "Behold I [Jehovah speaks] will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before ME." And again, in Isaiah xl. 3. "The voice crying, In the wilderness prepare ye the way of Jehovah, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." It was the way of JESUS that was to be thus prepared. He is the "Adonay Jehovah—the Lord Jehovah" of Isaiah xl. 11, "who shall feed his flock like a shepherd: and gently lead them who are with young." Compare John i. 18. "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten God (μονογενης θεος)* who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." This text plainly shows that the glory of the Adonay Jehovah, manifested throughout the Old Testament dispensation, was the glory of the Son. He made Himself of no reputation (εκενωσε, Philippians ii. 7, not *emptied Himself* as some have said), He did not

* See Tregelles and Codex Sinaiticus.

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divest Himself of His Godhead when He came in the flesh—that was impossible. "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." This was as true of Him when He lay as a babe in the manger as it is now. He is the Life and the Light essentially and always; as much so in Nazareth, or on the Cross as now in glory. In resurrection, the circumstances of manifestation are different, but it is the same Life. Voluntarily to hold His Divine power in abeyance, so as not to put it forth, save when it was the will of the Father that He should put it forth, is something very different from not *having* the power. If He had it not, how could He have said, "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up?" Could any one, except Incarnate God, have met all that Jesus had to meet? What was there that was not arrayed against Him? Not only men instigated and impelled by Satan,—not only Satan with all the mighty power that he wields as the head of the unseen spiritual world of evil, but it also "pleased Jehovah to bruise Him, and to put Him to grief." Sustainment was withdrawn from Him. Our Surety stood alone when the last cup of suffering—the cup of wrath, was put into His hand to drink. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Yet under all this, not only did Jesus voluntarily continue to endure all that was appointed to be endured, but whilst enduring, He manifested all the absolute perfectness of heaven. Not more perfect was the manifestation of His excellency when He was in the bosom of the Father before all worlds, than it was whilst He was

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passing through judicial death under wrath. Could any one that was not God have done this? His indwelling Godhead did not in one jot or tittle lessen the acuteness of the appointed suffering. As man He suffered as intensely as if He had not been God, but His Godhead, though it did not relieve His humanity from suffering, yet strengthened it to bear the suffering, and gave to that suffering a value which eternity will unfold.

Thy sin expiated or atoned for.] When we meet with words in Scripture which refer to SACRIFICE and the SATISFACTION thereby rendered to the claims of God's governmental holiness, it is needful to be careful as to their translation, in order that we may not confound between words that speak of the *results* of satisfaction, such as cleansing, forgiveness, &c., and passages which direct our thoughts to the *satisfying sacrificial act* by which such results are procured.

The act of Christ in presenting on the Cross by "His one oblation of Himself once offered a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction" for the sins of all His believing people, supplies the ground on which the TITLE to every blessing received by the redeemed in time, or in eternity, altogether and exclusively rests. Before any such blessings can be bestowed on sinners, provision must be made for the full satisfaction of the claims of God's holiness. The eternal Son, He who is called in John "the only-begotten God," (μονογενης θεος) undertook to make this satisfaction. Before it was actually accomplished, God fore-acted on

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it, for Christ was "the Lamb fore-ordained." But now it *has been* accomplished. "There remaineth no more offering for sin." Our heavenly Advocate bases His intercession for His believing people on the fact that His one finished offering has removed the imputation of guilt, and secured to them the imputation of righteousness for ever. In making satisfaction for them it was needful that He should bear in their stead every appointed penalty, and present in their stead the perfectness of His own obedience—an obedience that was "unto death, even the death of the Cross." There He was "made a curse" (Gal. iii. 13); there also "He gave Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." Eph. v. 2. We must, therefore, in reading Scripture, be careful to give their full weight to words that are intended to direct our minds to the great truth of SATISFACTION rendered unto God by the one oblation presented unto Him by our holy Substitute on the Cross. On His sacrificial work completed on earth before He took His seat in glory above the heavens, rests our *title* to every blessing that time or eternity *has* brought, or *shall* ever bring.

The word chiefly employed in the Old Testament to denote the SATISFACTION thus rendered is כָּפַר; in the New, ἱλασκομαι and its cognates.

This word, כָּפַר *kahphàr*, is first found in Genesis vi. 14, where it is used, not in its secondary or sacrificial sense, but in its primary sense of "*cover*"—"to cover as by pitch." Noah was commanded *to cover* the ark with pitch. "Thou shalt cover it [כְּפַרְתָּ] with pitch."

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[כִּפֻּר so called, because it covers.] But though the primary meaning of כָּפַר may thus be gained, we should greatly err if we supposed that when used in reference to sin and God's wrath against sin, it may be regarded as if it were identical with "hide," or "cover." Ἱλάσκομαι is not identical with καλύπτω, nor כָּפַר with כָּסָה.

The meaning of כָּפַר (in *Pihel*) when used in its sacrificial sense is to be sought in the passage of Genesis in which it next occurs, where Jacob, speaking of Esau, says, "I will *appease* him [literally, I will *cover over his countenance*, i.e. *his wrath*] by the present." Genesis xxxii. 20. Here our attention is directed not towards the *result* as affecting Jacob, but towards Esau and his displeasure, and to the present by which Esau was to be satisfied and his anger pacified.

Accordingly, whenever כָּפַר is used in relation to sin, the thought of satisfaction rendered to God by atoning sacrifice is either the exclusive thought, or else a thought included in the meaning. Thus when the Levites are presented, it is said, "Aaron *made an atonement* for them to cleanse them." Numbers viii. 21. The atoning offering was *towards God*, and hence *the result* —the cleansing. So also Numbers xvi. 46. "Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation and make an atonement for them, for there is wrath gone out from the Lord: the plague is begun." From this verse the all-important sense of כָּפַר, as denoting atonement *made to God*, may be grounded. Wherever, therefore, we find this

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word used in relation to sin or defilement, we must never quench the thought that the result to the person or thing beneficially affected, whether in the way of forgiveness, cleansing, or otherwise, is only reached *by means of an atoning offering presented to God.*

For the most part, our English translators preserve this thought sufficiently in the passages where כִּפֶּר occurs in its direct sacrificial sense. They commonly render it "*make atonement,*" not using that word in the sense of at-one-ment, i.e. reconciliation, but always in the sense of "expiation or expiatory equivalent."—*Johnson.*

Accordingly, when כִּפֶּר עַל is used (as it often is) to denote the application of the efficacy of the atonement made to the persons or things brought under it, such application is always the result of the blood of the sacrifice having been first offered expiatorily to God. See Lev. xvi. Consequently, כִּפֶּר should never be rendered simply *to purge* as in Ezek. xliii. 26, nor *to forgive* as in Jer. xviii. 23, nor "to be merciful" as in Deut. xxi. 8. If no *one* word can be found in English to express the meaning, a periphrasis should be used so as clearly to express the thought that the cleansing, or forgiveness, or mercy, results from and is founded on, atonement made to God.* In every case the defile-

* If any single word be used, "expiate" is perhaps the best. *Pio* and *expio* are used in Latin sometimes to denote the act of appeasing [Silvanum lacte piabant]; sometimes the purgation of the guilty person [filium expiavit pecuniâ]; sometimes compensation rendered to make amends for a transgression committed [legatorum injurias regisque cædem expiabant]. But whether

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ment or the guilt entailed *wrath*, and that wrath could only be removed by atonement.

The like may be said of the use of ἱλασκομαι and its cognates in the New Testament. They always involve the thought of atonement made to God. In rendering כַּפֹּרֶת, ἱλαστηριον,—*atonement-seat*, or some word expressive of the place where God acts in the power of atonement, would be far better than "mercy-seat."

Verses 8—13.

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? And I said, Here am I;

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the reference be to the person appeased, or to the person cleansed, or to the crime satisfied for, or to calamity averted [fulmen piabant], in either case the notion of atonement rendered to another is included. So is it likewise as respects כִּפֶּר.

The usual rendering of כִּפֶּר in our version is "*to make atonement*—atonement in the sense of expiatory offering. It is a pity that our translators have not always adhered to this rendering, but in not a few instances they have substituted for it, "to make reconciliation," which is to be regretted, as we cannot be too careful in giving prominence to the thought of atonement made to God, and distinguishing it from the result.

Schïndler, in his *Lexicon Pentaglotton* (as quoted by Archbishop Magee in his work on the Atonement, Vol. I., p. 326), after having observed that the general signification of כִּפֶּר is *texit, operuit*, modifies this generic signification according to the change of subject thus;—de facie seu irâ, *placavit, reconciliavit:* de peccato, *remisit, condonavit, expiavit:* de sordibus, *expurgavit:* de aliis, *abstulit, removit.* But this is not satisfactory, unless it were added that the first meaning of *appeasing wrath* is involved in all the subsequent modifications, and should be expressed in the translation.

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send me. And he said, Go, and say to this people, Hear indeed, but understand not; and see indeed, but perceive not. Make fat the heart of this people, and its ears make heavy, and its eyes close; lest it see with its eyes, and with its ear hear, and its heart understand, and turn, and one heal it. And I said, How long, O Lord? And he said, Until desolate be the cities for want of an inhabitant, and the houses for want of men, and the ground be utterly waste, and Jehovah shall far away have removed man, and great shall be the forsaking [that which is left forsaken] *in the midst of the Land. But yet in it shall be a tenth; and it shall return, and be for consuming. Like the terebynth, and like the oak which in falling have substance* [vitality] *in them, so a holy seed shall be the substance in it.*

Hear indeed, but understand not.] There is something peculiarly solemn in living at a period when judicial blindness is sent because of mercies despised. So has it been in Israel: so is it in Christendom. The past history of Israel illustrates but feebly the manner in which the teachers and rulers of Christendom have perverted the hearts, and misdirected the energies of those whom they have taught and guided. Even real Christians, for the most part, shun the close guidance of the Word of God. They cherish doctrines that will not bear the test of Scripture, and either give themselves over to a latitudinarian laxity of thought, or else to a wild imaginativeness, than which nothing leads farther from the paths of Truth. But Christen-

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dom has well nigh run its course. Out of its very centre, Antichristianism, like a foul and loathsome excrescence, is about to spring. Around Israel the toils of the great Apostate will be in an especial manner drawn. We need not marvel, therefore, that they will return *"to be consumed"* by judgments more terrible than have ever yet fallen on them, or any other people. Nevertheless, finally the cup of trembling shall be taken out of their hands and put into the hands of their Gentile oppressors. "Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again; but I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee, which have said to thy soul, Bow down that we may go over." Is. li. 22. This, however, will have to be considered subsequently in more detail.

To be consumed.] · היתה לבער. For a similar use of these words, see Numbers xxiv. 22. "The Kenite shall be wasted," literally, *"be for consuming or burning."*

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MARCIONISM.

Doctrine of Marcion respecting the Old Testament Saints.*

Among the many indications of the rapidity with which men's minds are departing from the Truth, there are few more ominous than the extensive diffusion in this country of a system of doctrine that teaches, that all the Old Testament Saints (although purchased unto God by the precious blood of Jesus) are to be excluded for ever from the Church, and from the Church's glory —that stigmatizes as Jewish, and as not designed for the Church, those very instructions which the Lord Himself, in His parting words to His disciples, expressly commanded to be taught to us†—that teaches that the Apostolate of St. Paul is of a higher order than that of the Twelve, and that his Gospel was different from theirs—that denies that the fulfilment of the Law by Jesus was essential to the salvation of the Church—that (instead of teaching, according to Scripture, that the Father hath "reconciled us *in the*

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* To be read in connexion with note on Old Testament Saints, see p. 154.

† See two last verses of Matthew.

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body of Christ's flesh through death) speaks of our being "justified in a risen Christ"—that confines to the Jews (as being alone formally placed under the Law) the text that speaks of Christ "being made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13), and imagines that the Church owes its salvation not to such a redemption, but to union with the Person of the Son. These, and like things, are now being extensively taught and received. Recently I heard one of the sustainers of this system affirm that there are "two Gospels; two ways, and two ends of salvation." He might have added, two Christs (for his system required it)—a Christ for the salvation of the Church (or what they suppose to be the Church) and a Christ for the salvation of the saints of Israel and others.

Few, probably, are aware of the origin of these and like doctrines. Their origin is evidently Gnostic. Marcion, a Gnostic of the second century, appears to have been the first who taught his disciples to reject as not properly Christian, everything that he was pleased to stigmatize as *Jewish*. Modern German neology, which has ransacked antiquity in order to become eclectic of falsehood, has disinterred and remoulded many a Gnostic heresy, and so they have been introduced into this country; although in England Marcionism has not as yet been fostered so much by neologians as by others.

The connexion between Marcionism and Germanism has thus been remarked on by Vaughan:—

"What Marcion is said to have done literally, that

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Schleiermacher does virtually in his system: for [i.e. instead of] 'I am not come to destroy the Law and the Prophets,' *he reads the converse*. . . . . The dread of everything Jewish, the general characteristic of Gnosticism, has been carried to its extreme in modern times by Baüer of Tubingen, who has misspent no ordinary learning and ability in the attempt to show that the history of early Christianity is that of a struggle out of a Judaized atmosphere into a purer element; and that when the Christian religion shall have been entirely freed from the Jewish prejudice which narrowed the mind of our Lord (!!!) and His immediate followers, its work will be accomplished, and the law of love universal. The Judæophobia, as one may call it, has been exemplified among ourselves of late in a 'History of the Hebrew Monarchy.'"—*Vaughan's Essay on the Writings of Schleiermacher*, p. 78.

Marcion carried his rejection of everything *Jewish* so far that he excluded Abraham and the Old Testament Saints not only from the Church, but from salvation. "False," says Irenæus, "is Marcion, and so are his followers, who exclude from the inheritance *Abraham*, to whom the Spirit hath borne testimony by many others as well as by Paul, saying, 'Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.' So also the Lord bore testimony to him . . . . saying, 'When ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of heaven, but you yourselves cast out.' This, therefore, is manifest, that they who disallow Abraham's salvation and frame the

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idea of another God besides Him who made the promise to Abraham, are themselves aliens from the kingdom of God, and are excluded from the inheritance of incorruption, seeing that they set at naught and blaspheme God, who introduceth through Jesus Christ Abraham to the kingdom of heaven as well as his seed, that is, the Church, upon which is conferred the adoption and the inheritance promised to Abraham."—*Irenæus. Lib. iv., cap. xviii.*

Marcion not only rejected the Law and the Prophets, but even in the New Testament he refused to receive any of the Epistles except those of St. Paul, not including the Hebrews, and he rejected all the Gospels except that of Luke, which, however, as well as the Pauline Epistles he mutilated, and received only in part.

The Marcionite "aversion," says Lardner, "to the Old Testament was so great, that on this account they mutilated many passages in the New in those books which they admitted, rejecting all that related to the Law and to the Prophets, or which were quoted thence as plainly foretelling the coming of Jesus Christ, or which spoke of His Father as the Creator of the world."—*Lardner, History of Heretics. Chap. x.*, § 33.

As regards the Marcionite notion that "Paul alone knew the truth, and that to him *the mystery was manifested by revelation,*" Irenæus writes as follows. "With regard to those (the Marcionites) who allege *that Paul alone knew the truth, and that to him the mystery was manifested by revelation,* let Paul himself convict them when he says, that one and the same God wrought in

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Peter for the Apostolate of the circumcision, and in himself for the Gentiles. Peter, therefore, was an Apostle of that very God, whose was also Paul: and Him whom Peter preached as God among those of the circumcision, and likewise the Son of God, did Paul [declare] also among the Gentiles. For our Lord never came to save Paul alone, nor is God so limited in means, that He should have but one Apostle who knew the dispensation of His Son. . . . . Again, in the Epistle to the Corinthians, when Paul had recounted all those who had seen God after the resurrection, he says, in continuation, 'But whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed,' acknowledging as one and the same, the preaching of those who saw God after the resurrection from the dead."—*Irenæus. Book iii., chap. xiii.*

It would be impossible within the limits of the present paper to detail all the omissions and alterations which Marcion made in the Gospel of Luke, which he professed to receive, and in the Epistles of Paul. They may be found at length in Epiphanius and Irenæus, or in Lardner. I will content myself with a few examples.

In Luke xiii. 28, instead of reading, "When ye shall see *Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets* in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out," Marcion reads it, "When ye shall see *all the just* in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves rejected," &c. In Gal. iii. Marcion omitted the sixth, seventh, and eighth verses, in order to get rid of the mention of

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Abraham, and of the Gospel as having been preached to him; on which account he ought also to have omitted part of the ninth verse, "συν τῳ πιστῳ Αβρααμ —*with faithful Abraham*, and according to Tertullian's manner of stating the argument against him, this was the case."—*Lardner*, § 43.*

He also omitted, according to Rufinus, the two last chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, ending the Epistle with the 23rd verse of the fourteenth chapter. We can well understand his reason for this. Not only is the fifteenth chapter full of quotations from the Jewish Prophets respecting the call of the Gentiles into participation of Jewish blessings (as for example, "Rejoice ye Gentiles with his people"), but in the sixteenth chapter the Apostle declares that he used the prophetic writings, i.e. the writings of the Old Testament, in making known the Gospel which he was sent to preach. This was the very thing that Marcion denied.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, amongst other alterations, he erased, in the 20th verse of the second chapter,

* Tertullian's words are: "When he also adds, 'for ye are all the children of faith,' it becomes clear that what the heretic's (Marcion's) industry erased was the mention of Abraham's name, for by faith the Apostle declares us to be 'children of Abraham;' and after mentioning him he expressly calls us 'children of faith also' . . . . . and of whose faith, if not Abraham's? 'To Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy Seed, which is Christ.' Fie on Marcion's sponge! But indeed it is superfluous to dwell on what he has erased, when he may be more effectually confuted from what he has retained."—*Tertullian against Marcion. Book v.*, § 4.

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the word "*prophets*" ("built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets") for Marcion saw that all his system must fall if he admitted that the two lines of foundation laid respectively by the Apostles and Prophets were knit into the unity of the same building by both resting on the same chief one corner-stone, Jesus.

These examples may suffice. The fact that Marcion saw the necessity of erasing these and like words, was a sufficient acknowledgment of their conclusiveness if permitted to stand. Which shall we say is the greater sin, to cancel the words of Scripture, or to destroy by false exposition their plain unmistakeable meaning?

The Marcionites also adopted the heresy of the Docetæ, and taught that Christ had *the appearance* of a human body, but not the reality—that He appeared to have flesh, but really had not, so that His sufferings were apparent merely.* They made no distinction between "flesh" in a physical, and "flesh" in a *moral* sense; and believed that everything *material* must partake of evil.

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* "Nothing," says Tertullian, "substantial can be allowed to be effected by an unsubstantial thing,—nothing full by a vacuity. If the habit were putative, the action was putative; if the workers were imaginary, the works were imaginary. On this principle, too, the sufferings of Christ will be found not to warrant faith in Him. For He suffered nothing who did not truly suffer."—*Tertullian* III. 8.

Some of the followers of Marcion, however, believed Christ to have real flesh, though they would not admit that He was born. This seems to have been the notion of Apelles.

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It must not be supposed, however, that Marcion, in rejecting the Old Testament, rejected it as untrue. He evidently believed its truth, but contended that the God and the Christ of the Old Testament were different from the God and the Christ of the New. Else he could not have avowed his belief in a Jewish Christ to come. "Marcion," says Lardner, "acknowledged Jesus to be Christ, but not the Christ foretold by the Jewish Prophets. He could not deny that a Christ or Messiah was there spoken of, but he said a Person different from our Lord Jesus Christ was there meant. He allowed, as Tertullian expresses it, that the Prophets of the Creator had promised a Saviour to the Jewish nation, who should deliver them out of the hands of their enemies, and restore them to freedom. But he pretended that this Deliverer was not the Son of God; and that the oracles of the Old Testament did not agree to Jesus Christ. So that 'this man,' as Tertullian observes, 'who was so adverse to Judaism did himself Judaize in the most shameful manner.' 'Marcion,' says that writer, 'is for two Christs—one who appeared in the time of Tiberius for the salvation of all nations, and another the restorer of the Jewish state, who is yet to come.'" *

"The doctrine of two Christs is also asserted by the Marcionite in the dialogue ascribed to Origen. In a

* The later developments of Marcion's system were probably adopted by him from Cerdo, whom he met at Rome, and who seems to have advanced further in Gnosticism than Marcion had when Cerdo met him.

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work also said to be written by Athanasius, we are informed that Marcion supposed that as Jesus came from the *good* God, so there was to be another from the *just* God, because each of them was to be the father of a Christ peculiar to Himself; the *good* God of one, the *just* God of another."—*Lardner*, II. 21. He drew a distinction between true moral perfection, which, according to him, "consists in love and goodness, whose essence is only to communicate itself, only to bless, to make happy, to redeem; and mere justice, which metes out everything by desert, rewards and punishes, requites good with good, and evil with evil, which gives birth to mere outward discipline, but can communicate no power of moral enthusiasm—this (says Neander) was Marcion's great *practical* and fundamental idea which formed the nucleus of his whole theory. But between love and a justice that revealed itself in punishment he found no means of reconciliation."—*Neander, Vol. ii., p.* 140. Hence, believing matter and flesh to be essentially connected with evil, he taught that the God and the Christ of the Old Testament and of the Jews, were distinct from the God and Christ of the New Testament revealed to the Church, which comes as a kind of parenthesis between the antient Jewish period, and the future Jewish period when the Christ of the Jews will appear and effect their deliverance.

"The point of practical importance with Marcion," says Neander, "was to assert the absolute newness of the creation by Christianity; to sever every link of connection between it and the world as it had subsisted

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before." "While he gave an exclusive prominence to the love of God, the revelation of which in the gospel had penetrated his whole soul (!!) he allowed all the other divine attributes to retire out of view. Seeking only to insist upon that which belonged peculiarly to Christianity, but rending it from its connection with the groundwork of the Old Testament, he determined to know nothing at all of a retribution grounded on the holiness of God."*—*Neander, Vol. ii., p.* 140.

"It seems" (I still quote from Neander) "although it is a point which cannot be determined with certainty,† that Marcion taught that the Messianic predictions of the Old Testament would still be actually accomplished in behalf of the believers in the Demiurge. [Marcion's name for the God of the Jews.] The Messiah promised by the Demiurge would yet appear and bring to a rigid judgment those who had not been freed from his power by faith in *the higher Christ,* and awakening those who had died *righteous* according to the Old Testament, would unite them all in a millennial reign of earthly felicity. The *eternal heavenly kingdom* to which the Christians belonged would then form the

* That is, he excluded such acting in righteousness from the God and Christ of the Church, but not from the God and Christ of the Jews, as will be seen from the remarks below.

† The words of Tertullian clearly show that Marcion expected a Christ yet to come to the Jews. Tertullian's words are, "when to these are added their Christs, the one which appeared in the time of Tiberius" [whom they believed to have had the *appearance* of flesh only] and the other which is promised by the Creator or God of the Jews.—*Tertullian,* Book I., chap. XV.

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direct antithesis to this perishable *earthly* kingdom. The souls of Christians would lay aside their gross bodies as the bird rises out of the egg. . . . . The God of love [i.e. the God of the Church] does not punish; those, however, who refuse to accept the proffered fellowship with Him will fall under the power of the Demiurge [the God of the Jews] and His avenging justice. Whoever, on the other hand, enters into fellowship with the Father through faith in the Son of God, becomes partaker, even on earth, of *a divine life* superior to the power of the Demiurge and of Matter. For him there is no longer any judgment. Delivered from the power of the Demiurge, he is under the special protection of the God of love. . . . . From the whole context of Marcion's ideas resulted the antithesis between those who remained subject to the Demiurge's government, and those who, released from his power, become objects of the providential care of the Supreme God, whom He trains for His kingdom, with whom all things shall work together for good."*—*Neander, Vol. ii., p.* 147.

The history of Marcion affords a memorable example

* The distinction drawn by Marcion between the condition of the Church and those whom he imagines to be placed in a subordinate condition of blessing under the God of the Jews, is very marked. It would seem, however, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the rest of the Old Testament saints, were excluded by Marcion even from this subordinate blessing. His statement as to them is most revolting. I will not transcribe it. It may be seen in *Epiphanius*, Lib. I., § 42, and still more fully in *Irenæus*, Lib. I., chap. XXVII.

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of the manner in which men, while pursuing a phantom of imagined spirituality, can be drawn into a place of direct antagonism to God and to His Word. There can be little question that Marcion was sincere. He was zealous, energetic, and self-denying even to austerity. Ephraem Syrus says that Marcion "acquired, by his ascetism, a deceptive shew of sanctity." In his early days he is said to have given his money to the Church. (Pecuniam in primo calore fidei ecclesiæ contulit.) To *his* mind matter was synonymous with evil; and flesh, in its physical sense, identical with sin. Absorption into something immaterial was, in his estimate, essential to salvation. The assumption of real flesh by the Son of God and the resurrection of the body, he denied. But the Scripture stood in his way; it contradicted his thoughts, and therefore the greater part of Scripture he avowedly rejected. He would have been more consistent and more honest, if he had rejected the whole.* For he acknowledged not either

* It is better for the interests of Truth that its adversaries should reject Scripture rather than that they should professedly own it, and then undermine it by sophistical subtilties of interpretation. In Germany, on the subject of justification, laborious efforts have been made by many writers to misinterpret the words of Scripture, and so to use Scripture as a weapon against the Truth. This habit, however, is now being abandoned, and a more audacious (yet more truthful) course adopted. Thus Köllner, one of the latest German commentators, says, "It is clear that the true sense of this passage (Romans iii. 26, 27) entirely agrees with the doctrine of the Church, concerning vicarious satisfaction, as unfolded in the Lutheran symbols. Nevertheless, although it is certain that Paul intended to teach the doctrine of vicarious

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the God, or the Christ, or the redemption, of which the Scriptures speak. The Scripture speaks only of the God of Israel and of the Christ of Israel, and of a redemption wrought out in the midst of Israel according to the Law and the Prophets—but this God, and this Christ, and this redemption, Marcion scorned.

It is said that Marcion, towards the end of his life, repented of his heretical course, and sought to counteract its effects. But it was too late. In a world like this, a natural, an appointed buoyancy belongs to the thistle's seed; it floats upon the breeze, and the air's ready current soon diffuses it over the surface of the wide earth. "Thistles shall it bring forth to thee." "Marcion's heresy," says Epiphanius who flourished about the middle of the fourth century, "is even now existent at Rome and in Italy, in Egypt and Palestine. in Arabia and in Syria, in Cyprus and in Thebais,

satisfaction, not merely as a figure (or in the way of accommodation, but as a matter of full personal conviction), yet it is easy to see how he was necessarily led to adopt this view, from the current opinions of the age in which he lived."—(*Köllner*, as quoted by Dr. Charles Hodge in his commentary on the Romans.) "Such writers" (continues Dr. Hodge) "are at least free from the guilt of *perverting* the Word of God. They allow the Bible to mean what it says, although they refuse to submit to its teaching. This is better than not only refusing to submit, but forcing the Scriptures to teach our own foregone conclusions. In Germany, the subjection of the Bible to philosophy has come to an end. In this country, it is still struggling for liberty. It is desirable that the separation should here, as there, be made complete, between those who bow to the authority of the word of God, and those who acknowledge some higher rule of faith. Then both parties can agree as to what the Bible really teaches."

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It is found, too, in the Persian district, and in other places."—*Epiph.* I., p. 42. "The essential character of Marcion's mind," says Neander, "would make him labour more earnestly and assiduously than other Gnostics in the propagation of his principles. For, while others believed it impossible to communicate their higher knowledge to any save a small number of Christians—the spiritual men: Marcion, on the other hand, was convinced that his doctrine was no other than the primitive Christian one. . . . . He must have felt himself constrained to communicate to all Christians the light of truth which had fallen to his own share. Hence he made frequent journeys, and spent his life in an uninterrupted series of conflicts with heathens and with Christians. To be hated, and to suffer, he looked upon as the destination of every Christian. 'Fellow objects of hate and fellow-sufferers' (*συμμισουμενοι και συνταλαιπωροι*), was his common form of salutation to his brethren in the faith."—*Neander, Vol. ii., p.* 138.

His heresy received from some the condemnation it deserved. The aged Polycarp of Smyrna, is said to have met Marcion at Rome. Marcion, who in his earlier days had known Polycarp, accosted him: "Dost thou remember me, Polycarp?" "I do know thee," replied Polycarp; "the first-born of Satan." "Such (says Irenæus, who records the incident) was the horror which the Apostles and their disciples felt against holding even a verbal communication with any corrupters of the truth; as Paul also says: 'a man that is

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a heretic, after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself.'"—*Irenæus*, III. 3. Such was the comment of Irenæus: such the depth of his feeling respecting departures from the Truth. How utterly contrasted with the serene apathy with which men now contemplate these things, and call their indifferentism, sobermindedness and love! Neander comments on the same incident as Irenæus. "The old man," says Neander, speaking of Polycarp, "otherwise so amiable, could not extend his love to the enemies of the Gospel; and as such Marcion appeared to him, *for he was unable to discern the Christian element which lay at the root of his very errors!*" That is, a man may utterly reject all that God has revealed respecting Himself and His ways, and yet "the Christian element" may be found at "the root of all his errors."

The heresies of Marcion are scarcely more to be deprecated than the comments of Neander on them. Thus Neander supposes him to have "belonged to the number of those who were first brought to the faith, not by the tradition of the Church, but by their own study of the written word"—that word which he mutilated and blasphemed. "Perhaps," continues Neander, "it was the majesty of Christ as it shone upon Him in the contemplation of His life, and the study of His words, that attracted him to Christianity. And the Pauline type of doctrine which most completely harmonized with his tone of mind, may have been the form in which he first learned to understand

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Christianity, and which chained his spirit once for all." —*Neander, Vol. ii., p.* 133.

Again, Neander writes: "the consciousness of redemption formed the ground-tone of his (Marcion's) religious life: the fact of redemption he regarded as the central point of Christianity. [Redemption, *as revealed in Scripture*, had no place in Marcion's system at all.] . . . . To his heart, filled and flowing with the image of the God of mercy and compassion who had appeared in Christ, Nature appeared as something wholly inconsistent with the way in which this God had revealed himself to him in his soul. . . . . The same mental tendency which made it impossible for him to recognise in Nature the God of the gospel, allowed him to see nothing but contrariety, no fundamental unity between the Old Testament and the New. . . . . In the Churches of Asia Minor he believed it impossible to recognise the genuine Christianity which had been preached to them by the Apostle Paul. Accordingly, this conviction may have given rise [to his desire] to purify Christianity from the foreign Jewish elements with which it had been mixed, and to restore it to its primitive form. . . . . And so, step by step, he was continually driven to place the Old and New Testament in sharper contrast to each other," until at last, he boldly taught that there was one God and Christ for the Jews, and another God and Christ for the Church.

I will now conclude these already too extended remarks, by a few brief quotations from some of our

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Protestant Confessions in reference to the inclusion of the Old Testament Saints in the one elect body, the Church.

The confession of Dort, after quoting the words, "whom he predestinated, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified," adds, "this election is not manifold (*i.e.* diverse) *but one and the same of all which are to be saved, both under the Old and New Testament;* because the Scripture speaks but of one only good pleasure, purpose and counsel of the will of God by which He hath chosen us from eternity, both unto grace and glory, both unto salvation and the way of salvation, which He hath prepared that we should walk therein." . . . . and "this doctrine, touching God's election, was by God's appointment declared by the Prophets, by Christ Himself, and by the Apostles as well under the Old Testament as the New."—*Articles of Dort.*, VIII. and XIV.

Also the Confession of Scotland.

"We most constantly believe that God preserved, instructed, multiplied, honoured, decreed, and from death called to life *His Church in all ages, from Adam till the coming of Christ in the flesh.* As we believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so do we most constantly believe that from the beginning there hath been, and now is, and to the end of the world shall be, one Church, that is to say, a company, a multitude of men chosen of God, who rightly worship and entreat Him by true faith in Christ Jesus, &c."—*Art.* V. and XVI.

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So also the seventh of our English Articles.

"The Old Testament is not contrary to the New: for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to Mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign that the Old Fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the Law given from God to Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, do not bind Christian men, nor the civil precepts thereof ought of necessity to be received in any commonwealth; yet, notwithstanding, no Christian man is free from the obedience of the Commandments which are called moral." *

* The doctrines of the Roman Church are, it is well known, most erroneous and false as to the condition of the Old Testament saints whilst militant on the earth. Yet, even they, warned perhaps by Marcion's example, refuse to exclude them from the Church in glory. Thus Dr. Manning, in his recent work on "The Mission of the Holy Ghost," writes as follows:—

"The multitude and fellowship of the just who, from Abel to the Incarnation, had lived and died in faith and union with God, constituted the soul of a body which should be hereafter. They did not constitute the body, but they were waiting for it. They did not constitute the Church, which signifies not only the *election* but the *aggregation* of the servants of God; not only the calling out, but the calling together into one all those who are united to Him. Some of the Fathers do indeed speak of them as the Church, because they were to the then world what the Church is now to the world of to-day. They belong also to the Church, though it did not then exist, just as the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world, though the sacrifice on Calvary was four thousand years deferred. All grace was from the beginning given through the Most Precious Blood, though as yet it had not been shed. So the mystical body had its members, though as yet it was not created.

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See also Luther:

"When the Scripture saith that all nations which are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham, it followeth necessarily that all, as well Jews as Gentiles, are accursed without faith, or without faithful Abraham. For the promise of blessing was given to Abraham that in him all nations should be blessed. There is no blessing then to

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They were admitted to it when the kingdom of heaven was opened to them, and the Incarnate Word was exalted to His glory as Head over all things to the Church.

"As then till the Incarnation there was no Incarnate Head, so till the day of Pentecost there was no complete organization."

There are, no doubt, parts of the above statement to which just exception might be taken, but passing these, I quote the passage merely because of its unequivocal acknowledgment of the inclusion of the Old Testament saints in the ultimate glory of the Church. "All grace was from the beginning given through the most precious blood, though as yet it had not been shed," are important words. I question, however, whether these words and the paragraph as a whole, would please the censors of the Vatican, though probably they may be willing to make, for a time, concessions to Protestant prejudices in England.

We must remember too, that although the words "most precious blood" are blessed words, and grateful to the hearts of those who understand them according to the Scripture, yet they are suggestive of far different thoughts to the mind of a Romanist. They direct his soul not to the once perfected sacrifice, whereby he that believeth is sanctified and perfected for ever, but he thinks of blood carnally taken by him in material flesh, which he believes that he actually eats, and thus the value of that holy blood becomes his. Unless he carnally eats it he perishes: and so he becomes an idolater, and worships a phantom, and does (unless he repents) perish.

Dr. Manning's statements, respecting the condition of the Old Testament saints *whilst on earth*, are most objectionable. Thus

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be looked for, but only in the promise made unto Abraham, now published by the Gospel, throughout the whole world. Therefore whosoever is without that blessing is accursed."—*Luther on Gal. iii.* 10.

See also Calvin:

"And this is a singular proof of the benevolence of God toward us, that although from the beginning of

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when he says that "the Church is gathered from the world by baptism, and that into every soul rightly baptized the grace of Faith, Hope and Charity are infused, together with the seven gifts and a substantial union of the Holy Ghost with the soul is constituted," it is very evident that he excludes the Old Testament saints, while on earth, from the condition into which he pretends that baptism brings, and excludes them from the possession of that LIFE which is the portion of all the regenerate of every dispensation, and which when given involves everlasting relationship to God as His sons, and heirs of glory. Again, Dr. Manning says, "before the Incarnation, the Holy Spirit wrought in the souls of men, one by one, illuminating, converting, sanctifying, and perfecting the elect. But the union between His presence and the soul was conditional on the correspondence and fidelity of the individual. It was a dissoluble union," &c. (p. 58). And again, "its (Israel's) sacraments were shadows, working *ex opere operantis* by the faith of the receiver, *not by the virtue that went out of them*," &c.

The italics are mine. If all this were true, the Old Testament saints would not have been the subjects of *effacious* grace at all; and seeing that such grace could not reach them for the first time in another world, they must have been excluded from the company of the regenerated and the saved for ever. He who is not regenerated *here*, will certainly not be regenerated in another world. This doctrine of sacramental grace leads in the same direction as Marcionism. When Dr. Newman began to Romanize, he wrote some letters to the *Christian Observer*, questioning whether the Old Testament saints could be said to have been

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the world he showed Himself bountiful to His children [the Old Testament saints], He nevertheless so regulated His grace as to provide for the salvation of the *whole* body [in which we, of this dispensation, are included]. What more could any one among ourselves desire than that regard should be had to him in respect of the blessings with which God hath followed up Abra-

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regenerated, seeing that they had not received the sacrament of regeneration.

Dr. Manning recognises no distinction between the operation of the Spirit of God in quickening the elect, and His coming personally to dwell in those whom He has quickened. The Old Testament saints were regenerated as truly as we. They had LIFE as truly as we: and although the Spirit was not given to them as the Paraclete, or as the Spirit of son-condition (*υἱοθεσιας*), yet He was given to them as the Spirit of servantship (*δουλειας* Rom. viii. 15) because, though they were sons (see Gal. iv.), they were in a state of pupilage until redemption was perfected. "Now I say, that the heir, so long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all." Gal. iv. 1. And as the Old Testament saints received acceptance through the fore-seen value of the blood of Immanuel, so also they received Life before He, in whom that life was, was manifested in the flesh. As light existed before the sun, and was afterwards in the sun concentrated, and from it dispensed, so life was dispensed to the elect before He came, in whom that life essentially was, and in whom it was manifested. God fore-acted on what Christ was as fore-ordained. But wherever there is a disposition to misrepresent, or to magnify unduly the present dispensational standing of the Church, there the sacrificial work of Christ as alone giving the TITLE to all the blessings brought by redemption is depreciated, and results which God has made to depend exclusively on Christ's relation to the redeemed, are ascribed not to Christ's work, but to the Spirit. The truth of the Gospel is lost when this is so. Whether we say that they who are not baptized do not belong to

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ham, Moses, David, &c., *so that with them he might coalesce in the body of Christ?*"—*Calvin on Heb. xi.*

God has made a better provision for us than to allow that our elder brethren, who have preceded us in the path of faith, should be perfected in glory apart from us. The Scripture uses the word "apart"—χωρις. They who are not *apart* must be *together*.

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the body of Christ, or that they who did not receive the Spirit in the manner in which He is now dispensationally given, do not belong to the body of Christ, in either case we destroy the truth of the Gospel. *Title to belong* to the body of Christ is founded entirely *on* the work of Christ in redemption. The gift of the Spirit (which is a purchased result of *redemption*) does not give the *title* to membership in the body of Christ, but supplies *the power* of that *associated* action which is needed by those who are called to act together as co-members in one body. Are we to confound *title*, and power to act according to such title?

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THOUGHTS ON ISAIAH VII.

In the interval between the mission of Isaiah with that awful message of judicial blindness recorded in the preceding chapter, and the events narrated in the chapter before us, many years had passed. The whole of the reign of Jotham, and part of the reign of Ahaz, had intervened. It had been a period of very diversified experience to Judah.

The long-suffering mercy of God, still lingering around them, had given them in Jotham a king who was willing and anxious to lead them in right paths. There are few greater or more needed blessings than right guidance. We need it alike in the Church and in the world. We need both to be instructed and to be governed by those greater and wiser than ourselves. Yet there is no appointment of God against which man more persistently struggles than this. Self-government is the only government that self-will tolerates, and thus a path is trodden that leads farther and farther away from Truth, and from happiness, and from God. There is no greater proof of the whole moral framework of society being diseased than when opportunity of being led in right paths is afforded, but rejected.

So was it with Judah. They refused the guidance of

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Jotham. "Jotham did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. . . . . BUT THE PEOPLE DID YET CORRUPTLY." 2 Chron. xxvii. 2. The voice of the people was found to be anything rather than "the voice of God." The people withstood the voice of God. They did corruptly.

No doubt if Jotham had been more uncompromisingly stern—if he had refused to spare "the high places and the groves," and had swept them all away, he would have prospered more. Compromise can never subserve the ends of Holiness and Truth: all that it does is to strengthen evil by affording occasion and encouragement to its continued development. Nevertheless the personal faithfulness of Jotham was not unacknowledged; "he became mighty because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God." 2 Chron. xxvii. 6. Yet notwithstanding this recognition of the uprightness of Jotham, the persistent progress of the people's evil came also in remembrance before God, so that even in Jotham's reign preparation for its punishment was made. "In those days the Lord *began to send* against Judah, Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah." Nevertheless Jotham was taken to sleep with his fathers before the gathering storm was allowed to break.

Ahaz succeeded Jotham. In him the people found a leader suited to the desire of their hearts. Under him the mind of society in Judah—"public opinion" as it is called, could duly develop itself. "Ahaz walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten

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images for Baalim. Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. He sacrificed also and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree." 2 Chron. xxviii. 2—4. Yet Ahaz in doing these things did but reflect the character of Judah—privileged, favoured, enlightened Judah. It was grateful to them to be placed under this leadership for evil. They desired it. Head and heart were alike diseased.

The storm therefore which had gathered in the days of Jotham, was now allowed to break on the head of Ahaz. "The Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter. For Pekah, the son of Remaliah, slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men; because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers." 2 Chron. xxviii. 5. Nor was this all. Encouraged by success, the hosts of Syria and of Israel united themselves, and advanced together against Jerusalem itself: they were not, however, permitted to prevail. "And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz, son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin, king of Aram [Syria], and Pekah, son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to war against it, but he could not war against it (i. e. so as

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to succeed). And it was told the house of David, saying, There resteth Aram [Syria] on Ephraim, and there shook his [the king's] heart, and the heart of his people, like the shaking of the trees of the wood before the wind." Thus the chapter before us opens.

Dark indeed and evil was the condition of Jerusalem: yet this was the very sphere for which Isaiah had been sanctified, that in it (after his lips had been touched by the live coal from the altar) he might act for and with God. From Uzziah's reign onward he had seen evil steadily progressing, and now (notwithstanding the chastisements that had been sent) he beheld it advancing still. During this lengthened period, no public act is recorded of him. Deserted and despised, save by a very few, he wept, no doubt, in secret places. But now the time was come for him to act. He was sent to meet Ahaz in the day of his calamity, with a message from the Lord. It was a message of goodness and compassion. "Then said the Lord unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field." Isaiah went, and Shearjashub stood by his side.

Shearjashub and Mahershalalhashbaz (see next chapter) are the symbolic names of the two children of Isaiah. The latter is a name of woe and of judgment. It conveys the thought of the spoiler hastened on by God to his appointed work of rapine and ruin. Mahershalalhashbaz may be taken as the superscription of all those parts of Isaiah's prophecy that speak of Israel and

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of Judah as smitten and desolated. This desolation was soon about to begin: it continues still, and will not end until the Land of Immanuel shall once more be brought under the outstretching of the dark wings of the last great Assyrian—Antichrist. "The spreading out of his wings shall be the filling of the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel." The force of the word, Maher-shalalhashbaz, therefore, is not yet spent. It is still to be kept before our eyes. Forget it, and we shall soon lose ourselves in darkness. On the other hand, Shear-jashub [a remnant shall return] is a name of consolation. Our eye rests upon Shearjashub first, before we hear of Mahershalalhashbaz. We are cheered by a view of the final joy before we hear of the antedecent sorrow. Moreover, although the immediate object of this name is to assure us of mercies yet to come—mercies still hidden in the womb of time, yet faith also discerns in it the pledge of present blessing: for as there shall be a remnant preserved and borne through the day of fiery visitation, (Zech. xiii. 9.) and made God's witnesses in the millennial earth, so now also, there is, and ever has been, a remnant, (this is as true in Gentile Christendom as in Israel) whom grace preserves in the midst of the moral darkness that broods, and will brood over the earth, on to the very end of the Day of man—a remnant watched over by the Lord, and taught of His Spirit—a remnant that might be (save for their own wilfulness and worldliness) gathered into a place of honoured separateness like unto that which pertained to Shear-jashub as he stood by the side of Isaiah, sharing the lot,

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and identified with the testimony of God's blessed, but rejected servant.

The place in which Isaiah was directed to meet Ahaz, was one well suited to a message of mercy. It was in the fuller's field, by the side of a stream that flowed from beneath the sides of Zion and Moriah. Zion was the mountain of Jerusalem's strength. Its citadel was there. And Moriah (which virtually was one with Zion) was the mountain of Truth, for on it the Temple stood. Think of what Zion will be in that future day, when streams of blessing issuing thence shall fill the whole earth with gladness. Think how it will be recognised then as the place where Heaven's almighty power will have associated itself with Heaven's pure Truth, in order that that Truth might not only be diffused throughout the earth, but maintained in its rightful supremacy. But what Zion will be in the day of its glory, that Zion measurably has already been. *There* God's mighty power operated of old: *there* it watched over and guarded Jerusalem, His chosen City—"the City of the great King." Thence too, have emanated the blessings which we, Gentiles, now receive. "Salvation is of the Jews." The stream that Ahaz beheld silently and softly flowing from beneath Zion, symbolized a power of ceaseless blessing that was steadily bearing on Jerusalem, and which has not, even now, been taken from the earth. The stream of grace that has come forth from Zion, flows steadily still through the world's wide wilderness —unnoticed often, or else seen only to be despised. There are, however, some—a remnant, a little flock,

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whose eyes are opened to discern what it is, and whence it comes; and they rejoice in it, and drink of it, and find in it the waters of healing, and of cleansing, and of eternal life.

How was that stream needed by Jerusalem and her people! Daily it sustained them, for they drank thereof, and without it they could have had no "fuller's field;" The fuller's field was the place of cleansing—the place where uncleanness was washed away, and the defiled garment made white. What thoughts are more grateful to the conscience-stricken sinner than those associated with the fuller's field? It was the waters of Siloam that gave to Jerusalem the fuller's field. Thus, too, was supplied that wondrous pool, which up to the time when Immanuel came, remained in Jerusalem as the one solitary witness that the miraculous power of God had not utterly forsaken the still beloved City. The pool of Siloam* continued to bear witness to the presence of God's power to heal, until it was superseded by that mightier power of healing—healing unto eternal life which is found in that "fountain which has been opened for sin and for all uncleanness" in the blood of Immanuel. Yet notwithstanding all this, the waters of Siloam were by Ahaz and his people rejected, and the river of Assyria chosen.

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* "*Siloah*," says Dr. Eadie, "mentioned in Neh. iii. 15, or *Siloam* (John ix. 7), or *Shiloah* (Is. viii. 6), is a rivulet at the foot of Zion and Moriah. It formed two pools, called the 'upper pool' (Is. vii. 3), or 'King's pool' (Neh. ii. 14), and the lower pool" (Is. xxii. 9). One of these pools is mentioned John ix. 7. See Dr. Eadie's Biblical Cyclopædia, words, *Siloam* and *Conduit*.

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Could the petty stream that flowed through the fuller's field be compared with the waters, "strong and many," of Euphrates? Ahaz answered, No: and many an Ahaz-like heart at this present moment re-echoes the judgment. The rill that flows softly from Zion is spurned, and men hasten to drink of the waters of the river of Babylon. Truly they shall drink thereof: but those waters shall be to them as "the bitter water that causeth the curse, that entereth" into the bowels, causing the "belly to swell, and the thigh to rot." What a contrast between those waters of death, and the waters which they have despised—waters of life—waters whose real source is "the Throne of God and of the Lamb!"

The fuller's field, therefore, watered by the waters of Siloam, was a place well suited for that message of mercy which Isaiah was sent to deliver to the terrified House of David. Although stricken, they were not abandoned. The Lord their God was still near—able and willing to give them cleansing, and healing, and strength. And in order that they might know this, and prove the greatness of His long-suffering mercy, He sent Isaiah with Shearjashub (that name itself a pledge of the faithfulness of His love), and bade him stand by the symbolic waters of Siloam, and there to speak words of encouragement to the cowed and trembling heart of Ahaz. "Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither let thy heart quail before these two smoking fire-brands—at the heat of the wrath of Rezin and Syria, and of the son of Remaliah." However fiercely

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these fire-brands have flamed against thee; however thou mayest have felt the power of their burning, yet fear not, neither be dismayed. They have well nigh burned themselves out; they are now tails of fire-brands merely. Though they have taken counsel against thee, and are working out their plans and think that they have thee in their grasp, yet their counsel shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. The heads of Syria and of Israel are Damascus and Samaria, and the heads of Damascus and Samaria are Rezin and Remaliah's son, but has Judah no head? Such was the implied question. The answer should have been, yea, Judah hath a Head. The Head of Judah is Jerusalem, and the Head of Jerusalem is Jehovah of Hosts. Let Syria and Israel rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son, but we will rejoice in Jehovah of Hosts our God. Such should have been the answer: such would have been the answer of faith. But such an answer was in vain waited for from the lips of Ahaz and his people, for they had no faith. They were terrified and they trembled; but the faithless heart when terrified seeks not unto God. It turns to other aid. Terror brought Saul to the witch of Endor: it drove Ahaz to the king of Assyria. Ahaz and his people had scanned carefully the troubled scene around them. They had considered the circumstances and formed their resolve; and that resolve was to make, not Jehovah but Assyria, the future stay and hope of Jerusalem: and the city that was soon to take the headship of Assyria was Babylon.

The resoluteness of this resolve was well known unto

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God: yet for the sake of the remnant of His people whom He loved, and for the further manifestation of His mercy, and in order that He might yet further prove the rebellious House of David, He continued still to plead with Ahaz. "Moreover, Jehovah spake further [added to speak] unto Ahaz, saying, Ask for thee a sign from [from with, παρα] Jehovah thy God; make deep thy petition, or raise it up on high." So let thy doubting heart be confirmed. But Ahaz instantly replied, "I will not ask, neither will I tempt Jehovah." It was either hypocrisy cloking its unwillingness to approach Jehovah under a pretended dread of presumption, or else it was the bold declaration of an impious resolve to make no trial of Jehovah—a refusal to have recourse either to His power, or to His mercy. "I will not ask, neither will I make trial of Jehovah." Ahaz had resolved to make trial of another. He had determined to make Assyria's king his refuge. How then could he trust in Jehovah? He could not trust in both: he could not lean on Jehovah, and on Assyria too. He must choose either one or the other, and he had already in his heart chosen Assyria. Such was the resolve of David's House; such the decision of its representative and head. The Lord God of Israel was deliberately rejected by them. "And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; is it a small thing for you [i.e. too little a thing to satisfy you] to weary men, that ye must weary my God also?" They should not indeed *so* weary Him as to prevent His giving (not indeed immediately, but as soon as the set time should come)

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His great sign to the House of Israel and to the House of Judah. "Therefore Jehovah Himself [though ye refuse to ask] shall give you a sign; behold the virgin pregnant and the bringer-forth of a child [this was the sign that should, in due time, be; it was a thing that never had been, nor ever should be again] and she calleth his name Immanuel." Ahaz and the unbelieving house of Judah around him were not to live to see this sign. Seven hundred years were yet to pass before it should be given, but its promise was to all who feared the Lord; a pledge that neither traitors from within, nor enemies from without, should succeed in destroying or blighting the hopes of David's House and of Jerusalem. Wickedness and apostasy might work within, and multiplied enemies might threaten from without, yet the House of David should not be destroyed, for how could that House be subverted into which Immanuel was to be born? And although chastisement upon chastisement was about to come upon Israel and upon Judah, and upon their Land, so that it should be made desolate, yet it should not be so desolate as to be unable to supply to the Heir of David's House nourishment; and nourishment that should be continued, so as for Him to attain to years of maturity and strength. No enemies, no power of man, or of Satan, should prevail so as to prevent the birth of Immanuel into the House of David, or to take from Him nourishment, or hinder His growth. As surely as He should be born, so surely should the Land, even the smitten Land of Israel, supply "butter and honey" for His use, so that He should be sheltered,

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and cherished, and increased in wisdom and stature, and exercise understanding in distinguishing betwixt evil and good. Should the House of David tremble as if they were about to be utterly crushed by their enemies when they had this promise of the manifestation of Immanuel in their midst? Would they indeed persist in turning to Assyria, rather than unto Him who was undertaking to work these things for them?

Hearing, they heard not. Their ear was heavy: their eye closed: their heart fat. In vain, therefore, God spake to them of Immanuel—His great gift unto Israel and unto men. On the meritorious service of Immanuel, the TITLE of the people of God to all their blessings altogether rests. By His obedience and death they are justified. "By the knowledge of himself shall one that is righteous, my servant, bring righteousness unto the many: AND their iniquities he shall bear."* In His cross we find our altar (Heb. xiii. 10) whence has

* Such is the literal rendering of this most blessed verse, which I hope to consider further on another occasion. The use of *οἱ πολλοὶ* and *κατασταθήσονται δίκαιοι* in Rom. v. 19 is evidently derived from this verse. The Righteous One by His course of righteousness, commenced and finished on the earth, brings righteousness not to believers out of Israel merely, but to "the many" —mankind at large, if so be they have by faith "the knowledge of him." The commencing word of the last clause is not *FOR*—כִּי—a mistranslation which has led some to say that all that is needful to our justification is that Christ should bear our iniquities. The very object of the verse is to show that two things are needful to our justification, viz., that He as the Righteous One should bring to us righteousness, AND also that He should bear our iniquities.

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ascended into the unseen sanctuary above the heavens, the sweet smelling savour of the one accepted Sacrifice under which we stand accepted according to its acceptableness,—precious according to its preciousness, now and for evermore. He hath earned for us life, and the life so earned by His obedience unto death, is given to us IN HIM. "By means of the righteousness" by Him provided (see Rom. v. 21) "grace reigns over us unto eternal life;" and by means of Him (see Rom. v. 17) we finally, are to "reign in life." All this has been provided through the "one righteousness" of Immanuel. Thus has been opened, in the midst of the darkness and corruption of earth, the well-spring of everlasting life. In the passage before us, however, these things are not unfolded. The object of God was to declare to the House of David and to Jerusalem that, whatever their obduracy and unbelief, He would still persevere in His counsel, and fulfil the great purpose of His grace in giving Immanuel. His great SIGN should be given though they might persist in despising it. And lest any should say, the sign is too distant—it is afar off; we want a nearer pledge; a nearer pledge was given. The Prophet went on to declare that before any one who was then a child in years (whether the child who stood by Isaiah's side, or any other child) should attain to age of understanding and know to distinguish between evil and good, the Land of Israel, before the two mighty leaders whereof Ahaz trembled, should be forsaken. And so it came to pass. Before any one then in childhood came to years of discretion, Israel sank

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before the mighty power of Assyria. See 2 Kings xv. 29, and xvii. 3. Here then were tokens of God's present power yet working in mercy in the midst of His people. Ahaz, indeed, and the House of David, and Jerusalem, heeded it not. But Isaiah, and a remnant in Israel, saw and understood, and trusted, and found in quietness and in confidence their strength. So was it then: so is it now. So must it be in every dispensation in which the many who profess to see, see not; and when it can be said of a little flock only, "Blessed are your eyes for they see; and your ears for they hear."

The sin of Ahaz, however, was not to remain unpunished. "Jehovah will bring upon thee and on thy people, and on thy father's house, days that have not come since the departure of Ephraim from Judah, even the king of Assyria." Ahaz had made the king of Assyria his refuge. He had hired him as a razor whereby he would shave off from Israel and from Syria all that gave to them comeliness and strength. And in this he succeeded: Israel and Syria were shorn, and Ahaz and his people "rejoiced against [see next chapter] Rezin and Remaliah's son;" for they saw them fall—irrevocably fall. So far Ahaz triumphed. But this razor that he had hired, and used so successfully, was soon to be turned in all its terrible sharpness upon himself. "In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor hired in the parts beyond the river, that is to say, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and also the beard shall it [the razor] take away." Thus the Land of Judah too was to know desolation.

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It too should be denuded of its people, so that only a residue should be left. The natural luxuriance of the Land should indeed for a season supply that remnant with more than plenty. "It shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall save alive [i.e. shall rescue from the grasp of the enemy] a young cow and two sheep: and it shall be from the abundance of the yielding of milk [because of the luxuriance of the pastures that shall plentifully spring up in the depopulated Land] he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the midst of the Land."

The native luxuriance of a depopulated land would of course supply for a season superabundance of nourishment to those who sought merely *to live*, and who were content to dispense with the corn-field, and the vineyard, and the fruitful garden, if only enough to sustain them in life could be obtained from the flock, or from the herd. The corn-field, and the vineyard, and the garden, require that there should be many a hand to sow and to plant, to prune and to water, and this cannot be in a depopulated land. Yet a depopulated land may easily, to a few, become a place of rest. A rescued few, abundantly supplied with all that is *necessary* for life, may soon settle down into full contentment with their portion, and console themselves for the loss of the vineyard or the garden by the reflection, that although not supplied with their fruits, they are nevertheless relieved from many responsibilities and anxieties and toils. Yet to expect a sabbatism in the midst of a desolation sent in chastisement by God, is but a deceiving

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dream. There are such things as thorns and briars: and are not thorns and briars sure to dominate in any land where cultivation ceaseth? Where man ceaseth to labour, thorns and briars will soon reign. They will spread not only over the desolate vineyard, but over the pastures too. Wild beasts of the desert and all devouring monsters will lurk there. Terror will reign there as well as desolation. "With arrows and with bows will men come there, because all the Land shall become briars and thorns." It is not permitted, therefore, to God's people to dispense at their will with the cultivated vineyard, and to say that they will content themselves with the uncultivated pasture. If they have not the vineyard, they must have the forest, full of danger and the power of destruction as well as of desolation. If there be no hand to plant the garden there will be none to withstand the briar.

And now (not to speak of Israel) can we look on the present condition of Christendom and be blind to the extent of the moral desolation? The people of Christ were gathered once in godly unity—unity that was godly, because it was unity *in the Truth*. Their habits, and doctrines, and ways, were expressive of the mind of Christ. They were epistles of Christ known and read of all men. Christendom was the land of Truth. There were many then, strong and wise to labour—able to break the fallow ground, to sow and to plant, to water and to prune. Consequently, there was many a vineyard, many a smiling corn-field, many a fruitful garden. But now how changed the scene! None who

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are able to contrast darkness with light, truth with falsehood, can be unconscious of the present ruin. Yet many console themselves. They say, what though that bright shining of light whose presence once marked the heritage of the Lord be gone; what though associated strength has given place to isolated weakness, yet the remnant of God's people, however few or feeble, cannot perish. They shall surely be preserved in the Land, and find nourishment sufficient to preserve their soul in life; and if that be so, is it not a sufficient mercy? Let consciousness, therefore, of what we have, cause oblivion of what we have not. The gospel net is still cast; it still gathereth of every kind; and although the sheep of Christ may not be either folded or fed as once they were; though they may be a scattered and wandering flock; yet they shall surely find something whereon to feed, and ultimately all shall pass into the everlasting fold. Let us be content, therefore, and be thankful. Has not a tone of feeling like this extensively prevailed? Yet surely the preservation of our spiritual life is not the only question that is to be present to the hearts of God's people. The interests and honour of God, as well as our instruction and edification, are essentially connected with the circumstances and manner in which that life is developed. If the methods of God require that there should be the cultivated corn-field or the vineyard, His purposes will not be answered by our willingness to content ourselves with the luxuriance of spontaneous vegetation. Nevertheless we have sought to do this, and to find, as it were, a sabbatism in the

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midst of ruin. We have said, God's people shall surely live: how or on what they are fed, matters little. But the unconcern of indifferentism is not the repose of faith. Our carelessness, therefore, respecting the corn-field and the vineyard—our indifference as to whether the children of God do, or do not, know and walk in the Truth, is being punished by the rapid increase of "thorns and briars." Spots vacated by Truth will be occupied by Apostasy; and where the servants of Christ cease to labour in their appointed manner, there the servants of the Devil will soon make manifest their power. Some seem at last to be awakened to a consciousness of this. Individual quietness and repose which have been so inordinately prized, are found to be imperilled almost in every home by the inroad of deadly falsehoods. The arrow and the bow are being assumed by many a hitherto inert hand: and they who have refused to encounter Falsehood in its incipiency, find to their sorrow that they are obliged to meet it in its augmented strength. It is true, now, and will be increasingly true, till the end comes, that the instructed servants of Christ, themselves few and feeble, move throughout that which should have been the Land of Truth, not expecting to find "orchards of pomegranates with pleasant fruits; or vines with their tender grapes giving a good smell;" but expecting and finding forests of thorns and briars—strongholds of apostasy, where forms of falsehood lurk more terrible and more destructive than the fangs of the lion or the bear. They move, therefore, armed. The bow and the arrow are in their hand.

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They slay, or seek to slay enemies where they once gathered fruits.

Yet the dark picture is not *altogether* unrelieved. However terrible the scourge that may be sent upon God's people, however their heritage may be laid waste, yet grace never permits that the desolation should be *total*. Great and terrible was the desolation that the passage before us describes; yet in the midst of the wide wilderness of ruin, the hand that sowed and that cultivated was not altogether wanting. And so is it still. There are yet some spots, isolated and almost unknown, removed, as some high hill-summit, far away from the haunts of men, where patient, and not altogether unrequited labour may yet be found. The circumstances may be unpropitious; the ordinary appliances of cultivation may be wanting. It may be the wearying labour of the mattock, rather than the less toilsome labour of the plough. Yet the mattock can successfully withstand the thorn. "It shall come to pass that on all hills, that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briars and thorns." Apostasy cannot reign where they who abide in Christ's truth patiently labour. "Who then is that faithful and wise servant whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household to give them their portion of meat in due season." There ever have been, and to the end there shall be some such. "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing." There, and there only, shall spots of fruitfulness be found. Even the pastures may elsewhere perish; but they shall not perish there. "There

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shall not come there the fear of briars and thorns; but it shall be for the sending forth of cattle, and for the treading place for sheep."

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NOTES ON ISAIAH VII.

Verses 1 and 2.

And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz, son of Jotham, son of Uzziah king of Judah, [that] *Rezin, king of Aram,* [Syria] *and Pekah, son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to war against it, but he could not war* [i.e. war successfully] *against it. And it was told the House of David, saying, There resteth Aram* [Syria] *on Ephraim. And there shook his heart* [i.e. the king's heart], *and the heart of his people, like the shaking of the trees of a wood before the wind.*

Went up to Jerusalem to war against it.] In order to gain instruction from the past history of Israel, it is not necessary (nor indeed is it possible) to trace out an historic parallelism betwixt their course and ours. Conscience can discern in the past many an illustration of the present, even though there be no such exact or continuous similarity as to make the one history a strict typical counterpart of the other. The instruction conveyed in such a chapter as that we are now considering is founded on analogy—analogy being a resemblance of the *relations* in which certain things stand to other things, and not implying similarity in the things them-

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selves. Many a person now may stand to Truth and its servants, in a relation resembling that which Jezebel held towards Elijah, or Ahaz towards Isaiah: but this does not imply that those persons are in all respects like Jezebel or Ahaz, or that they who are persecuted and despised are in all respects like Elijah or Isaiah. Analogy is a resemblance of relations merely.

Is there not a marked similarity between the relation that Judah held towards corrupt and idolatrous Israel, and that occupied by Protestantism towards the rest of idolatrous Christendom? Protestantism *in profession* is Bible Christianity. Against Protestantism idolatrous Romanism and Liberalism are now uniting their strength, just as Israel and Syria, in godless concord, threatened Judah and Jerusalem. Protestantism has its *true* and also its Ahaz-like defenders. Its true defenders are few: nor at present are even its Ahaz-like defenders numerous.

But they are likely to increase. Men will probably soon discern that many of their most valued privileges (liberty, order, and the like) are bound up with the maintenance of what they call Protestantism. They will see that the Scripture cannot be utterly cast out without many a temporal blessing being cast out with it. Even democratic Dissent is not so thoroughly blinded as to be unconscious of this. Accordingly, after a few more triumphs of Idolatry and Liberalism, we shall probably see a more extended desire to rally around the banner of nominal Protestantism. But who will be its defenders? Will they be men who fear God

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and love His Truth, and who desire to purge Protestantism from its corruptions and secularization, or men who base their hopes for the future on intellectuality, education, moral culture, social progress, civilization, and the like? Such men are wont to judge of their position by comparing it with some of the advanced forms of evil around them, rather than by viewing it in its relation to God and to His Truth. The tone of their spirits, therefore, is boastful rather than humble. They affirm that society (notwithstanding the presence of some temporarily threatening clouds) is steadily advancing. They have great confidence in the future. "Magna est veritas et prævalebit." A good time is coming. You may speak to them of *Shearjashub* and of a *remnant* only being spared, but they who are bent on universality will not hear of *remnants*. And as respects Mahershalalhashbaz, no thought is more utterly abhorrent to their souls than that. They are confident of coming prosperity and triumph. Shall they listen to idle tales respecting judgment and woe? It is the talk of fools.

Not that they are unconscious of the necessity of *some* change. They see that the ground whereon they have hitherto sought to stand will serve them no longer; and therefore they look around for some pillar on which they can lean for the future. Enlightened public opinion is their hope. Religious truth must not be abandoned, but it must be moulded anew, and accommodated to enlightened public opinion. This may involve the abandonment of creeds and confessions, and

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all stereotyped forms of thought, but that will be an advantage. Truth and Scripture must be made to have a certain elasticity and pliableness—the times demand this: and orthodoxy, if it cannot continue to hold a measure of iron, must be content with a more flexible rule of lead. Yet what is all this but a discarding and abandonment of God? The very object of the Scripture is to stereotype Truth. Flexibility may suit well the treacherous compromising indifferentism of man, but it has no place in the legislation of God.

God may speak to such men of the stream bringing cleansing and life that flows gently around them from Zion, the mountain of *grace*, but that stream they esteem too little, too restricted in its diffusion, and too uncertain in its results to be of practical value in an hour like this. Salvation, full, free and everlasting, through the substitutional obedience and suffering of a Sin-bearer, is a basis too narrow for those who wish for a system of world-wide comprehensiveness. The stream of Siloam that flows softly will not satisfy those who long after the waters of Euphrates, "strong and mighty." The coming manifestation of Immanuel in glory, and the events connected therewith, may be declared to them, but such things are no more heeded than were the words spoken by Isaiah to Ahaz respecting the birth of Immanuel as the Virgin's son. Doctrines like these (say they) whether true or false, go contrary to the present flow of human thought. If taught, they would be rejected, and what value is there in that which is resultless? Utility is the true measure

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of value, and that only is useful which commands influence. Put before us truth that is influential—influential that is for *our* purposes, and we will hear it; but trouble us not with anything besides. Such is the temper of these men. They are no more disposed to prove Jehovah than was Ahaz.

Ahaz found his Babylon, and they of whom I speak, will (soon probably) find theirs. A system is arising before which the lordly *dominance* of Ecclesiasticism as well as the incoherency and disorder of Liberalism will give way. Antichristianism, when it first forms itself into a system, though it will allow a wide scope to religious thought, will, nevertheless, effectually *rule*, and forcibly restrain all action that is deemed to be socially disturbing. Ahaz-like men who simply think of escape from present danger, and of having old and dreaded enemies smitten, will, no doubt, hail the advent of this system as the advent of a friend: but it will array in fuller and more extensive combination than ever, the powers of falsehood against the weakened citadel of Truth. A system of concord based on Truthlessness must rage against the unbending rigidity of Truth; and Truth has not many defenders, nor are they strong. Yet there are, and there shall be to the end, some who discern betwixt the still stream that flows from Zion, and the waters of the river of Babylon—who love the one, and hate the other. Happy are they. Whatever comes, blessing rests upon their heads for evermore, though they may eat the bread of affliction, or share the dungeon of Jeremiah.

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Verses 3 to 9.

And Jehovah said unto Isaiah, the son of Amoz, Go out to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, at the highway of the fuller's field. And thou shalt say to him, Take heed [literally, be observant, i.e. of my message to thee from Jehovah], *and be quiet, fear not, and let not thy heart quail* [literally, *be soft*] *before these two smoking tails of fire-brands, at the heat of the wrath of Rezin and Syria, and of the son of Remaliah. Because Syria has purposed evil against thee (and so have Ephraim and Remaliah's son), saying, Let us go up unto Judah, and vex it, and make a breach in it for ourselves, and let us make a king in the midst thereof, to wit, the son of Tabeal. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, it shall not stand, and it shall not be. For the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin, for in yet sixty and five years shall Ephraim be broken from being a people. For the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe* [know ye] *that ye shall not be established.*

Let us go up unto Judah and vex it.] Marvellous was the mercy that thus lingered around Jerusalem, partly (as now in Gentile Christendom) because of the remnant according to the election of grace; yet not solely on that account. From the Jews there was to come salvation. From the House of David was to be born "the Saviour which is Christ the Lord." Until Immanuel had come, they were not to be uprooted from their Land. He was emphatically "THE Fruit of THE Land;"

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and by that Land He was to be nourished. See verse fifteen.

Moreover, Israel is yet to be the chief of all nations. It is the nation through which all other nations shall be in the coming age, regulated and governed. "Unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem." Micah iv. 8. No such destiny is in store for Gentile Christendom. For eighteen hundred years and more, the chief, and indeed the sole place of testimony to Truth in the earth has been committed to it. But it has utterly failed. It has been the great corrupter of Truth. Not having continued in God's goodness it shall be broken out of the olive tree in which it has long been as a cankered branch; and though God's mercies, for the sake of the remnant that are in it, do and will linger around it till the end, yet as an economy it is doomed, and will pass away under judgment.

Yet Gentile Christendom still dreams that a promise of indefectible standing in the earth is made to it. Where is such a promise made? The words are, "IF thou continuest in God's goodness well, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." Has Christendom continued in God's goodness? Let facts and Scripture answer that question. The only body that has a promise of indefectible standing *in the earth* is Israel in the next dispensation. *They*, when once they shall have been restored unto God, shall stand His firm and faithful witnesses in the earth until all earthly dispensations end.

As respects Protestantism, it is very evident that in

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Western Europe, the great sphere of its past influence, it is encompassed by dangers closely analogous to those that threatened Judah in the chapter before us. But even if God were to proffer His gracious aid as distinctly as He proffered it to Ahaz, would not the result be the same? Would it not be distinctly declined? Men who have formed their own plans of defence, will never welcome the proposals of God.

One would scarcely have expected that Judah—privileged, favoured Judah, would have been they who should have first brought in the power of Assyria and Babylon to crush, first Israel, and then themselves. Yet so it was. It was not Israel but Judah that appealed to Assyria. And when Immanuel came, it was Jerusalem that crucified Him. So now; it is in favoured Protestant lands that we find those principles chiefly cherished that are bringing in the reign of truthless, godless Secularism.

It is this that will hate and defy Christ and His Truth in a manner in which He has never yet been hated and defied, and then the end will come.

It shall not stand, and it shall not be, FOR *the head of Aram is Damascus, &c.* FOR *in yet sixty and five years shall Ephraim be broken from being a people, &c.*] The twice repeated FOR prefaces the two reasons why it (i.e. the device formed against Judah) should not prevail. It shall not be, FOR Aram has no better head than Damascus and Rezin. Are they strong enough to prevail against Jerusalem and Jehovah?

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Again, "it shall not be," FOR Israel, Judah's enemy shall itself be broken from being a people. And what else could they look for, seeing that they have no better headship than Samaria and Remaliah's son?—whereas the head of Judah is Jerusalem, and the Head of Jerusalem, Jehovah of Hosts. It is not unfrequent in Scripture to see successive reasons given for the same statement. See Matt. xxiv. 26, 27, 28, where the two latter verses give successive reasons for the statement in verse 26.

In yet sixty and five years, &c.] "From the destruction "of the Syrians to the full carrying away captive of "the Israelites, or from the time of this prophecy, sixty-"five years must have run out; for although the King-"dom of Israel was abolished in the sixth year of "Hezekiah, yet Israel did not immediately cease to be "a people when only some part of it was carried away, "but they entirely ceased to be a people when new "colonies were introduced by Esarhaddon." This was in the twenty-second year of Manasseh. *See Junius and Tremellius, and Prideaux, as quoted by Gill in locum.*

VERSES 10 TO 16.

And Jehovah further spake unto Ahaz saying, Ask for thee a sign from Jehovah thy God, make thy petition deep, or raise it high above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I prove Jehovah. And he said, Hear I pray you, O House of David, is it too little for you to weary men, that you must weary my God. Therefore the Lord

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Himself will give you a sign. Behold the Virgin pregnant and the bringer-forth of a son, and she calleth his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good: for before the child [*i.e. any one who is now a child*] *shall know to refuse the evil, and to choose the good, forsaken shall be the land before the face of whose two kings thou art distressed.*

Ask for thee a sign.] As regards the general exposition of this passage, I do not know that it is necessary to add anything to that which has been said in the preceding observations. See page 218. It seems strange that any one should suppose that "the child" mentioned in verse 16 refers to Immanuel as promised in verse 14. The object of the 16th verse is to supply a *present* pledge, on the part of God for the accomplishment of His promises touching Immanuel—the fulfilment of which promise was to be long delayed. The manifest necessity therefore of explaining the 16th verse of something then present forbids its being applied to Immanuel. It would be far more plausible to refer it to Shearjashub. But this is not necessary. Calvin rightly says, "I do not interpret this word of Christ, but as a general expression denoting children as a class." *

* Ego itaque hoc verbum non interpretor de Christo, sed de pueris omnibus in genere; in quo ab omnibus dissentio. . . . Ego autem accipio הנער collective, ut ה sit quidem notitiæ causâ additum, tamen ad demonstrandam potius ætatem quam certum aliquem puerum: ut cum vulgò dicimus. *L'enfant*, et articulum *le* majoris notitiæ causâ addimus; atque et Scripturæ satis usitatum est.—*Calvin in locum.*

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For a similar example of הנער used indefinitely, see Isaiah lxv. 20. "The child shall die a hundred years old." For the use of נער in the sense of "child," see Exodus ii. 6, where it is applied to Moses when found by Pharaoh's daughter — "behold the babe wept." See also Isaiah ix. 6.

The Lord Himself shall give you a sign.] As it was when Immanuel came, so was it when His birth was prophetically announced, and so is it still. The light given was rejected. Yet there was, and is, and shall be, a remnant who have ability to recognize and walk in the light. This remnant Shearjashub represented.

Yet they who belong to this remnant do not necessarily occupy the place of Shearjashub as he stood by the side of God's rejected servant. To be of the Truth, and to be practically identified with the place it holds among men, are two different things.

The sorrow of the present moment would not be what it is, if we saw the remnant of God's people, courageously and intelligently advancing into the position to which Truth leads. But is it so? How many a snare has been laid by Satan to entrap God's unwary servants as they begin to seek after better paths. Many may leave the side of Ahaz, and yet not find the side of Isaiah.

Satan can put on the garb of an angel of light, and his ministers are as himself. "By fair words and smooth speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple." Nor can the deceit be detected or the spell broken, save by

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a careful and intelligent use of the Word of God. "Every one that leadeth forward"* (and how many there are who profess to lead onward into higher and better paths)—"Every one that leadeth forward and abideth not in THE DOCTRINE of Christ hath not God." 2 John 9. How little are these words remembered! Many now speak contemptuously of doctrine. They say that they can abide in Christ without concerning themselves with doctrine. But they cannot. "He that abideth in THE DOCTRINE of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." Wherever the Word of God is not vigilantly and intelligently adhered to, falsehood will prevail: and no acceptable worship or service can be rendered where falsehood reigns. "If ye abide in me, and *my words abide in you*, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John xv. 7. High words and proud pretensions will be greatly checked if we remember such words as these. It is a mercy that from the days of Montanus to the present hour, proud pretensions have been more or less characterised by departure from the faith. So a beacon is afforded to those who cleave to, and use the Word of God.

VERSE 17 TO 25.

Jehovah will bring on thee and on thy people and on thy father's House days that have not come since the departure of Ephraim from Judah, even the King of Assyria. And it shall be in that day that Jehovah shall hiss for the fly

* Ὁ προαγων. Such is the true reading. Προαγειν dicitur ductor exercitus cum agmine procedens. *Stephens.*

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that is in the end [edge] *of the rivers of Egypt and for the bee which is in Assyria. And they come and rest all of them in the desolate valleys and in the clefts of the rocks and in all thorn hedges and in all pastures. In that day will the Lord shave by a razor hired in the parts beyond the river* (Euphrates) *by the king of Assyria the head and the hair of the feet and also the beard shall it* (the razor) *take away. And it shall be in that day that a man shall save* [keep alive] *a young cow and two sheep; and it shall be from the abundance of the yielding of milk, he shall eat butter; for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the midst of the Land. And it shall be in that day, every place where there are a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings shall be for thorns and briars. With arrows and with bow shall one go thither, because thorns and briars shall the whole Land be. But all hills that are digged with the mattock, there shall not come there the fear of briars and thorns, but it shall be for a sending-place of cattle and a trampling-place of sheep.*

For a moment the schemes of Ahaz prospered. He and his people beheld their dreaded enemies fall before the king of Assyria, and they rejoiced. But short-lived was their joy. Calamity upon calamity came on them. "The Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel; for he made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the Lord. And Tilgathpil-neser king of Assyria came unto him, and distressed him, but strengthened him not." 2 Chron. xxviii.

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19, 20. The result was that desolation (checked occasionally by interventions of mercy from the hand of God) steadily advanced until the picture drawn in the chapter before us began to be realized. The desolation is very great when the hedges that defend, and the pastures that are defended, are alike destroyed.

The defenders of nominal Protestantism are, as I have already observed, not unconscious of being threatened by two mighty foes. They have on the one hand the imperious demands of idolatrous Ecclesiasticism; on the other, the violence of revolutionary self-will. What then is their hope against these mighty, and for the present, confederated foes? They hope in Public Opinion. Yet what is Public Opinion save the expression of the mind of unregenerate man, swayed and directed by Satan? No doubt a time is drawing nigh when the exclusiveness of Ecclesiasticism will be made to give way, and when the licentiousness of Liberalism will be curbed. The object of Satan is to direct the concentrated force of humanity against God, and concentration of power is not found in revolutionary confusion; nor is the restrictive circle of Ecclesiasticism sufficiently wide for a comprehensiveness that is to include that which the Scripture calls Ἡ οἰκουμενη. Many a worldly careless Protestant is anticipating with joy the reign of godless Secularism—the child of enlightened public opinion, when government shall be made at last the expression of the mind of society. But what will such Secularism be in relation to Truth? It will only be a many headed hydra,

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directing all its energy, all its appliances, against the people and the Truth of the living God. If Isaiah, or Paul, or John, were at this moment to re-appear, Public Opinion would instantly crush them, or consign them to Patmos.

I do not by any means deny that Ahaz-like principles have been for ages working; but as the end approaches they will develop themselves more and more. There never surely was a period when men seemed more eager than now to renounce dependence on God, and to lean on Godlessness. Yet when has there been a period at which God has manifested more mercy in giving light, not only as to the Gospel, which has been preached with wonderful clearness,* but also as to the things that are soon about to be? The veil has, in a peculiar manner, been withdrawn from the future, and the coming darkness and the coming glory have been testified to with a clearness which none but Ahaz-like hearts could dare to despise. Yet where Truth has chiefly sojourned, there darkness will with most intensity reign. Thorns and briars are rapidly spreading, and will surely dominate. Nevertheless, the searching eye of faith is able to find in the midst of the ruin, some spots where a measure of fruitfulness yet is—where the fear of briars and thorns cometh not. There are, and there shall be places where the darkening, desolating, corroding thoughts of men give place to the testimonies of the Word of the living

* See for example "*The way of peace*," by Dr. Horatius Bonar.

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God. Wherever that is so, *there* shall be fruitfulness that no power of the enemy shall destroy. It shall be blessed here; it shall be for blessing, and honour, and glory in the great final day.

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THOUGHTS ON ISAIAH VIII. & IX. 1—7.

THE next division of the prophecy commencing with the eighth chapter, extends to the seventh verse of the ninth chapter inclusive. The scope is comprehensive. Beginning at the time then present, when Isaiah stood as the witness of God in the midst of the advancing evil, it passes on to the time when a greater than Isaiah, even the Holy One Himself, succeeded His servant in the place of lowly and rejected testimony, and became Himself the despised Witness for Truth. Christ was emphatically "the faithful Witness." Rev. i. 5. "I," said He, "have *for this* been born, and *for this* have come into the world, that I might bear witness to the Truth." But He was not only a Witness. He came also to be a Sanctuary. *That* was the great need of His people. They needed a place where they could meet God in peace, and worship and serve Him for ever, under the shelter of accepted sacrifice. He came to be their shelter; and to Him "the remnant," the "poor of the flock" sought—and still seek. *Their* place is next described. They are His "disciples"—instructed and guided by Him in the midst of the prevailing darkness. They too are the constituted guardians of His Truth; for the Law and the Testimony is com-

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mitted to their charge. "Bind up the testimony; seal the law among my disciples." They were, moreover, Jehovah's children; and as such committed to the care of Immanuel, and associated with Him throughout all the strife, and conflict, and sorrow of the "evil day." "Behold I and THE CHILDREN whom Jehovah hath given me, are for signs, and for wonders in Israel from Jehovah of Hosts, the dwelling-one in Mount Zion." Next is described that terrible and now approaching hour of consummated apostasy, when the forsakers of God, finding hope neither in heaven nor earth, shall turn to the Ohvoth* and to wizards that peep and mutter, and plunge further and further into darkness until suddenly the Day of Light bursts on them in terror, and the Day of Man gives place unto the Day of God. Such is the outline of this passage. Its principles bear closely on ourselves; nor can the hour of final consummation be far distant.

Mahershalalhashbaz is the name that prefaces this chapter—a name, as I have already said, pregnant with woe. Speed, spoil, haste, prey, are the thoughts included under it. Jerusalem under the leadership of Ahaz had deliberately rejected God and all His proferred mercies, and therefore Jerusalem was appointed for desolation. Enemies more terrible than any she had heretofore known were to be summoned to the spoil, and hastened to the prey. Woe was to follow upon woe until the Day of the Lord—that great and still future day of visitation, the day of burning and fuel

* See remarks on pages 74, 75.

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of fire should come, and "Zion be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness."

Yet ominous as this name was of evil to Jerusalem, its *first* application was not to them, but to their enemies. The terror of the name Mahershalalhashbaz was first to be directed against Syria and Israel—the foes before whom Jerusalem and Ahaz had quailed. "Before the child shall know to cry, my father, and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria." Gratefully, therefore, must the name of Mahershalalhashbaz, at its first utterance, have fallen on the ear of Ahaz. It seemed to attest the success of his most cherished scheme, and to say to him, Go on and prosper. The razor that he had hired against Syria and Israel was to fulfil its work. The tablet inscribed "unto Mahershalalhashbaz," and the child of the Prophet bearing the same portentous name, were both before him as constituted signs that utter ruin shall soon overtake his enemies.

No doubt it was a day of proud exultation to the House of David and to Jerusalem, when they found that their device had prospered. They had summoned the king of Assyria to their aid: he came at their bidding, and they beheld their ancient enemies sink utterly before his power. Their scheme had prospered, and they were rejoicing with great joy, when suddenly the voice of the Lord again sounded in their midst. Before, in the day of their calamity, when the heart of their king, and their hearts were moved as the trees of the wood are shaken by the wind, Isaiah had been sent

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to them with words of encouragement and mercy. Now, in the hour of their triumph, he again stood in their midst, not however with a message of mercy, but of judgment. They had despised the stream that flowed softly from beneath Zion, the mountain of their true strength, and instead thereof had sought to the waters of Euphrates, "strong and many." Therefore the lips of the Prophet were again opened. "Jehovah spake unto me yet again, saying, Forasmuch as this people [he refuses to call them by the too honourable name of Judah] hath forsaken the waters of Shiloah that flow softly, and [because] there is joy with respect to Rezin and Remaliah's son; [that is, joy over their destruction] therefore the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river that are strong, and that are many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he [the king, still spoken of under the emblem of the river] shall rise above all his channels, and go over all his banks: and he shall pass over into Judah; and shall overflow and pass through, even to the neck shall he reach; and the spreading of his wings shall be the filling of the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel." Such was to be the result unto Jerusalem. She had planned and achieved the ruin of her foes; but she had ruined herself also. The same wing of darkness that she had caused to be spread over Israel, was to be extended over herself likewise, until the whole land of Immanuel should be therewith shrouded. "The spreadings of his wings shall be the filling of the breadth of thy land O Immanuel."

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But Immanuel is a name of joy, and triumph, and blessing. As such it was given; and so faith ever recognises it. Accordingly, as soon as that name had passed the lips of the Prophet, the strain of the prophecy changes. Another string is touched. Words of woe give place to the voice of triumph. The stream of prophetic denunciation is turned away from Jerusalem, and made to bear upon her enemies; for her enemies are also the enemies of Immanuel. Their strength, therefore, is defied: their doom pronounced. "Associate yourselves, O ye peoples, and be broken in pieces; and give ear ye, ye far off countries of earth: gird yourselves and be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought: speak the word, and it shall not stand; for IMMANUEL." These words, so long since uttered, have not yet been fulfilled. They dwell still, even as they have ever dwelt, upon the lips of faith, but for their accomplishment we wait. They carry us onward into the future. We pass on from the then incipient hour of Jerusalem's sorrows to that future time when, begirt with confederated enemies more terrible than any that have yet assailed her, (see Joel ii., Is. xxix., Zech. xii.) she shall see them suddenly vanish as smoke before the wind, as wax before the fire, because of the manifested glory of Immanuel. "Lo, the kings were assembled; they passed by together. They beheld, so they marvelled; were troubled, and hasted away. Fear took hold upon them there, and pain as on a woman in travail." Ps. xlviii. 4. In vain, therefore, shall they

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gather themselves together: in vain shall they consolidate their strength. "Gird yourselves and be broken in pieces: gird yourselves and be broken in pieces," "for God is with us." Such, even now, is the anticipative voice of faith; such the cry that shall finally be heard from the lips of the repentant and spared remnant of Israel. A confederacy mightier and more terrible than any that earth has ever yet seen, will be formed against Jerusalem. They will say of Jehovah and of Christ, "Let us break their bonds asunder:" they will say of Israel, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance." Ps. lxxxiii. 4. It will be a confederacy of the kings of the whole Roman nation (*της οικουμενης ὁλης*) gathered by "spirits of devils working miracles." No gathering has been ever like it, neither will be ever again: "a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations." Joel ii. 2. The power of Jehovah of Hosts is alone competent to conflict with them; and He will conflict with them. "In Judah is God known; his name is great in Israel. In Salem also is his Tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion. There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. . . . . The stout-hearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep; and none of the men of might have found their hands. At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep. Thou, even thou, art to be feared; and who may stand in thy sight

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when once thou art angry? Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth trembled and was still, when God arose to judgment, to save all the meek upon earth." Ps. lxxvi. Then, but not before, shall the words be fulfilled, "Gird yourselves and be broken in pieces; gird yourselves and be broken in pieces." It will be "the battle of the great day of God the Almighty," that day of burning of which the closing verses of the passage before us speaks.

But this attestation to the glorious power of God, pledged though it was in the name Immanuel, was in the far distant future. In sending forth His Prophets, His power chose for itself a far different mode of operation. It operated in the midst of rebellious and obdurate evil, submitting to take the place of rejection and reproach, content with gathering to itself a remnant who also were to be despised and to suffer. Such was the place to which Isaiah was appointed, and for which he was strengthened.

He needed strength, for he was in every thing to withstand the current of the day. The whole flow of human thought around him was rushing on in a channel that was carrying men further and further into distance from God. Religiously and secularly (even as now) society was retiring from light, and repudiating blessing. Truth was hated and proscribed: falsehood loved and honoured. Under such circumstances, if the servants of God are to be preserved in holy separation, it needs that a strong and vigorous hand should be held over them. "Jehovah spake thus to me with a strong hand,

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and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people," or more literally, "Thus said Jehovah unto me with strength of hand, and instructed me away [i. e. so as to draw me away] from walking in the way of this people, saying," &c. In a day of danger, when by-ways, and pit-falls, and seducing voices abound, we need to be ruled by a firm uncompromising hand. Restraint, or it may be correction sharp and vigorous, is needed when through negligence, or weakness, or weariness, present dangers are inadequately estimated, or insufficiently watched against. If our inward eye should become dim, if we should cease to view the scene around us in the light of revealed Truth, if our steps should become halting, or should decline toward the path of apostasy, it is well that we should be made to feel that a strong hand is over us, able to correct with sharpness, even whilst it preserves in mercy. Separation unto God must, until the great hour of rectification come, involve antagonism to the world; and antagonism to the world must place us in habitual practical opposedness to the world's most cherished systems. We shall blame where others praise, and praise where others blame: we shall weep where others laugh, and warn where others encourage. Many a practice, and many a maxim conventionally sanctioned, many a time-honoured institution, many a scheme of future progress, or present advantage, we shall find ourselves obliged to repudiate and condemn. Satisfied neither with the past nor with the present, nor with the future of the Day of man, we shall be esteemed dark misanthropes—haters

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of our kind, and therefore shall be ourselves hated. "I hate him," said Ahab of the prophet, "for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." How can we prophesy good of present human progress when we know that its end is to be avowed confederation under Antichrist against the Lamb? (Rev. xvii. 13, 14.) Can we have fellowship with plans that lead to such an end as this? There are few words in Scripture more awful than these, "THE WRATH OF THE LAMB." Shall we dare it?

Separation, therefore, in an age like the present, must be the place of God's people—wise, sober-minded, humble, but resolute separation. If we take the Scripture as our guide, and prayerfully watch against the workings of our imagination, and the feverish impulses of excitement, our separation will be wise: if we call to remembrance our own short-comings, it will be humble. But separation under any circumstances must be painful. If there be vigour in our testimony we shall be persecuted: if there be feebleness we shall be contemned: and there are few things from which we shrink more than from silent contempt. It is a hard thing to submit to be ignored because we are despised. If therefore we are to be maintained in such a place, we need that a strong hand of resoluteness, as well as of mercy, should be over us to keep us in this place of honour; for is it not honour to stand (I say not with the same strength or power) in a position analogous to that in which Isaiah stood, expecting the things that he expected, eschewing the things that he eschewed? "Take, my brethren, the

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prophets who have spoken unto you in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering affliction and patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure."

If the Prophets only had been appointed to this place of "suffering affliction" it would have been marked with sufficient honour. But it has been held by a greater than they. Immanuel succeeded into the place which the Prophets as His forerunners held. Himself became THE Prophet. John i. 21, and Deut. xviii. 15: THE faithful witness. But He came not to testify merely. He came to be a Sanctuary. "Sanctify Jehovah of Hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a Sanctuary." This Jesus was, and for ever is. He was "for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem," but to us who believe He is an everlasting Sanctuary. By His substitutional obedience and death He has constituted Himself this. In Him we find our meeting place with God in peace. Under the shelter of His meritorious righteousness we worship—precious according to its preciousness. The value of all that He is in power, and holiness, and glory, is spread over us protectively. We may discern gathering floods, but we say, no water shall overflow that hiding-place. He is our Rock.

In bringing unto us free salvation, the purchase exclusively of His own merits, He has also called us unto the honour of following (though it be but feebly) in the same path that He as the great Witness of Truth

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trod perfectly. He has conferred on us the honourable and blessed name of "*disciples.*" We may indeed think lightly of that name and despise our high calling, and love to be in the Sanhedrim rather than without the gate bearing His reproach; yet the fact of the calling remains. He has called us to be His disciples. "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples: and I [it is the Messiah that speaks] will wait for Jehovah that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will wait on him. Behold, I and the children which Jehovah hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from Jehovah of hosts, the Dwelling-One in Zion. And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto the Ohvoth,* and to the wizards that peep,† and that mutter; should not a people seek unto its God? For the living [should it seek] to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, he is one for whom there is no dawn;"‡ that is, when the light of the day-star shall suddenly break in upon the dark-

* See remarks on pages 74, 75.

† "Peep" from the Latin *pipio* to cry with a shrill cry as chickens when they first break the shell (see Johnson)—hence applied to wizards and necromancers who spoke with a shrill attenuated voice—voce stridulâ et exiguâ.

‡ The *construction* of this clause is somewhat peculiar. It commences with the indefinite plural—"if they speak"—a frequent Hebraism often transferred into the New Testament is in Luke xvi. 9.—"they may receive you," that is, that ye may be received. Compare use of the French "on." If there be speaking *not* according to this word, he who adopts such speaking is one to whom there is no dawn. The individualisation in the end of the passage adds vividness to the description.

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ness, and the morning long looked for shall come, there shall be to such an one no morning-light. He is of the darkness, and into darkness he will depart. For such is "reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

Contrast with this the place of the "disciples." Not only have they light in the midst of the darkness, but what is more, to them the guardianship of Truth is committed. "Bind up the testimony: seal the law among my disciples." The law and the testimony are committed to their charge. They only have the Truth; they only can walk in it; they only can display its light to others. "That good thing which hath been committed to thee, [the deposit of Truth] keep through the Holy Ghost that dwelleth in us." "Hold fast the form of sound words." Others have no meeting-place with God in peace. But *they* have. Immanuel is their Sanctuary. The sacrificial fragrance of his accepted name covers them as with sweet incense for evermore; under it they worship, under it they serve. As God's children they have been to Him committed (see Heb. ii. 10.) and He, as the Captain of their salvation, has undertaken to bring them unto glory. Associated with Him during the time in which God hides His face from the House of Jacob, they are content to suffer, and to wait for the hour when He who has for a season forsaken Zion will return to Zion, and cause Immanuel's Land to be the Land of glory. They know that the night of darkness must continue till then; but they long for the morning, often saying, "Oh, that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion." Yet they

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wait patiently, remembering Him who "waited *for* Jehovah," (i.e. waited for Jehovah to act in His own appointed time,) and who also waited *on* Jehovah, as on One in whom He rested confidingly and whom He observantly served. Whilst the Church walked in practical separateness before God, mindful of its high calling, it stood as a sign to the House of Jacob from the Lord. It indicated that light, and strength, and blessing, had indeed been withdrawn from Israel, but that it had not been taken from the earth—that there was still a circle within which it might be found. But against this sign also, Israel's unbelief prevailed. It was a sign wondered at and despised. It wrought no repentance; it worked no godly jealousy. Although, therefore, it may be, and is true, that the present condition of Christendom is such as justly to stumble Israel, and to drive them into further distance from God (who can tell the awful responsibility that rests on Christendom as to this?) yet we have to remember, that even when it was otherwise—when the pure testimonies of Truth were found on the lips of the Apostles and early servants of Christ, the light was even then wondered at and despised. And so it will be again. Before the fulness of Antichristian darkness shall finally set in, a mighty testimony to Christ and to His Truth, will arise out of the bosom of Israel itself. It will be comprehensive, separative, and of pearl-like purity. But *it* also will be marvelled at, hated, and trampled down.

Christendom's responsibility in having become a stumbling-block to, and a perverter of, Israel, it is not

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easy to appreciate. Not only has it by its idolatry, and worldliness, and evil, raised up a barrier against the approach of Israel to Jesus,—it is now doing more than this. Multitudes in Christendom are seeking to wean Israel from a belief in Moses and the Prophets, and from all definiteness of Truth, and to lead them on into the dark ocean of scepticism which they have themselves entered. They wish that Israel should enter with them the dark circle in which they propose that men should fraternize apart from Truth, and apart from God. The dread result of this fraternization as it will finally be displayed in the land of Israel and in Jerusalem, may be seen in the concluding part of the chapter before us. What description can be more awful? It is the description of an apostate—one of those for whom there will be no morning—no dawn. When the power of Antichristian darkness and all the woe consequent thereon shall rest in all intensity on the land of Israel, "he [the apostate] shall pass through it, [the land] hardly bestead and hungry." He shall know famine in body and in soul. "And it shall be that when he is a hungered, he shall fret himself, and shall curse by his God and by his king" [i.e. in the recklessness and hopelessness of despair he shall in the name of his king and God—Antichrist, curse every thing] and look upward, [that is, to the heavens,] but there shall be no hope there. "And to the earth he shall look, and behold woe and gloom, dimness of anguish—but the thick darkness is dispelled:" not, however, to him for whom

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there is to be no morning light—no dawn. The morning without clouds shall come and chase away all darkness; but it shall not be for him. Light, the light of glory, will be more terrible to him even than darkness. To darkness he belongs, therefore in it, and with it, he shall pass away. Such is the doom of apostasy—such the end towards which a large section of Christendom around us is at this present moment hastening.

Suddenly and abruptly come the words, "*but the thick darkness is dispelled:*" yet they are not more sudden or unexpected than the event they indicate. Suddenly, and in a moment, will the brightness of heaven's own light and glory break in on the satanic scene below, and the consolidated evil of earth become like chaff scattered before the whirlwind. "Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath." The thick darkness shall be dispelled, for there shall not be [i.e. there shall not continue to be] darkness to her [the daughter of Zion, or the land of Israel] to whom there is now distress. As the former time debased the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, so the latter glorifies the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. "The people [i.e. of Galilee]—they who walked in darkness, beheld a great light, the dwellers in the land of the shadow of death, upon them light shone. Thou didst [of old] enlarge the nation, but didst not increase the joy: they [now] rejoice before thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the rod of his

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shoulder, and the staff of his task-master thou hast broken as in the day of Midian." It shall be the day of Israel's salvation: the Deliverer shall have come out of Zion and turned away ungodliness from Jacob." Yet great and marvellous as will be the light that shall then burst upon the eyes of delivered Israel, it will be but the return of a light that had before visited them, though they knew it not. It is the same light (then to be manifested in its proper glory) that had before shone on them in the person of Immanuel, when as Jesus of Nazareth He ministered in Galilee, proving that He was the One who had said, "I am Jehovah that healeth thee." Exodus xv. 26. "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles," have already during the time of their chastisement and debasement, been visited by that same light that will by and by come to raise them from that debasement, and to bring unto them glory. "As the former time debased the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, so the latter glorifieth the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles." And as it was the same light, so they in the midst of whom it shone were "walkers in darkness," "dwellers in the land of the shadow of death," less manifestly indeed, but as truly as Israel will be in the day of their final woe. "The people (i.e. of Galilee), the walkers in darkness saw a great light: the dwellers in the land of the shadow of death, light shone upon them." It shone upon them, but it was rejected.

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But it shone not only on them; it shone also towards God. He in whom that light was, came to obey and glorify God; and what He came to do He did, for the sake of those whom He was appointed to redeem. He went down into the depth of death—judicial death, bore all that was appointed to be borne, presented the unsullied brightness of His own perfectness unto God, and so provided that atonement, apart from which the day of joy and deliverance described in the passage before us, could never come. Immanuel must serve, and suffer, and die in order to save. If He had not been what He was in Galilee, He never would be what He will be in the coming hour of His manifested glory. Well, therefore, may the Holy Ghost, whilst describing that hour of glory, interpose a verse that leads back our thoughts to the past, and teaches us to find in the finished humiliation of the Holy One, the foundation on which the superstructure of blessedness in earth and in heaven rests.

Utterly destitute and (according to human thought) hopeless will be the condition of Israel when the morning of their salvation breaks. No confederacy that earth has ever yet seen is like the confederacy that will have been formed against Israel then. It will be the hour of the maturity of the world's strength, and all that strength will not only be gathered together against Israel, but gathered by an agency that is not of man. "Spirits of devils working miracles" shall gather it. (see Rev. xvi.) The nations shall rush like the rushing of mighty waters. The mighty tide shall roll into the

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valley of Jehoshaphat and pour in upon Jerusalem, when suddenly the Jehovah of Israel shall rend the heavens, and come down, and they shall confront IMMANUEL.

"Jehovah also thundered in the heavens,
And the Highest gave his voice,
Hailstones and coals of fire:
Yea, he sent out his arrows,
And scattered them:
And he shot out lightnings,
And discomfited them:
Then the channels of waters were seen,
And the foundations of the world were discovered.
At thy rebuke O Jehovah,
At the blast of the breath of thy nostrils."

What can withstand that day of burning? "The armour of the armed man in the tumult [of the battle field] and the garment rolled in blood shall [alike] be for burning—food of fire." In other words, that which still standeth strong in its armed strength, and that which has already fallen shall be alike "for burning—food of fire." All that is of man shall be bowed down, and Jehovah alone be exalted.

Then at last, Israel shall say, "a child is born to us, a son is given unto us: and the government [even the government of all things Ps. viii.] is on his shoulder." Him whom before they knew not, they shall recognise then, and own Him as the hope and joy of Israel and of all nations. "And his name shall be called Won-

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derful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." To the increase of the government and of the peace, there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to confirm it, in judgment and in righteousness from henceforth, and for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts shall perform this.

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NOTES ON ISAIAH VIII. & IX. 1—7.

Verses 1 and 2.

And Jehovah said unto me, Take thee a great tablet, and write upon it with the pen of a man, 'For Mahershalal-hashbaz.' And I will take to me to bear witness faithful witnesses, to wit Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.*

A great tablet.] "*A tablet*" on which any thing is inscribed, and not "a roll," is the proper meaning גליון. See Gesenius. Write on it with the pen [or stylus] of a man, i.e. in a plain ordinary hand that all

* If we retain the present pointing, we must understand the words, "I will take, &c.," as a continuation of the words of Jehovah. Dr. Alexander observes: "The Vulgate takes the verb as a preterite (et adhibui mihi testes) and Gesenius, Maurer, Knobel read accordingly וְאָעִידָה with *Vav conversive.* The Septuagint, Targum, and Peshito make it imperative (*μαρτυρας μοι ποιησον*), and Hitzig accordingly reads הָעִידָה. Gesenius formerly preferred an indirect or subjunctive construction, which is still retained by Henderson, *and that I should take as witnesses.* The true construction is no doubt the obvious one, *and I will cite as witnesses* (Hendewerk, Ewald, Umbreit)—God being still the speaker." See Alexander in locum.

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might read and understand. Plainness and simplicity is the characteristic of true teaching.

To Mahershalalhashbaz.] Haste—spoil—quick—prey. Or it may be read as a sentence: Hasten spoil, prey hastens. See Cocceius and Alexander.

Verses 3 and 4.

And I approached unto the Prophetess; and she conceived, and brought forth a son. And Jehovah said unto me, Call his name Mahershalalhashbaz. For before the child shall know to cry, my father and my mother, there shall be taken away [literally one shall take away] *the wealth of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria before the king of Assyria.*

Before the child shall know, &c.] The spoiling of Damascus and Samaria which was to take place speedily, was designed as a *present* pledge that the more distant promise respecting Immanuel should in due season be fulfilled. God never asks His people to believe any thing without sufficient attestation. The genuineness and authenticity of His written Word have been adequately attested by Him. But men now despise His attestations; and despise Him.

Verses 5, 6, 7, 8.

And Jehovah spake to me yet again, saying, Because this people hath despised the waters of Shiloah that flow softly, and rejoice with respect to Rezin and Remaliah's son

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[i.e. rejoice over their fall]; *therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river that are strong and that are many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall rise above all his channels, and go over all his banks: and he shall pass over into Judah; shall overflow and pass through, to the neck shall he reach, and the spreadings of his wings shall be the filling of the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.*

The waters of the river, &c.] How little they who are now despising the gentle flow of the stream of Truth, and are turning from God and from the Bible to truthless Secularism, know that *Assyria* will be the home of that Secularism—the place where its throne will be reared, and its godless strength centralized. Thus the waters of Euphrates will again be strong and many. It will again be "the *great* river Euphrates," (see Rev. xvi. 12.) the symbol of the strength of godless civilization by whose dark wing the land of Israel shall again be overspread, till it shall encounter there the presence of Immanuel in His glory. See Rev. xvi. 14. But what solemn interest does the knowledge of this give to a chapter like the present. It ceases to be a tale of bygone days. Vivid and awful is the light that it throws on the now near approaching future.

Verses 9 and 10.

Associate yourselves, O ye peoples, and be broken in pieces; and give ear ye far places of earth: gird yourselves and be broken in pieces: gird yourselves and be broken

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in pieces. Take counsel together and it shall come to nought, speak the word and it shall not stand, for Immanuel [God is with us.]

*Associate yourselves, &c.**] There have, no doubt, been many gatherings against Israel that have foreshadowed (partially and imperfectly) the last great confederation of which this passage speaks. Although such foreshadowing events admit of parts of the description being *applied* to them, the passage as a whole can only be *interpreted* of that to which it properly belongs. The very fact that the Land of Immanuel still groans under the power of the Gentile stranger is a proof that the passage is not fulfilled.

Verses 11, 12, 13.

For thus said Jehovah to me, with a strong hand [literally with strength of hand] *and instructed me away from walking in the way of this people, saying, Ye shall not say a confederacy to all to whom this people shall say a confederacy, and its fear ye shall not fear, nor be afraid. Jehovah of hosts, him shall ye sanctify, and he shall be your fear, and he your dread.*

Say ye not, a confederacy, &c.] When any supposed or real citadel of Truth is shaken, and men feel that their own interests or comforts are shaken with it, they

* Or "*congregate yourselves*" (Vulgate and Chaldaic) רֹעֲעוּ from רָעָה to associate as flocks do in feeding. Imp. Pual. See *Fausset in locum.*

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tremble: but if they deem their own interests secure, they feel about Truth very much as the mother in Solomon's judgment did about the child that was not her own. We care little what becomes of that which we *love* not.

The force of the passage before us has been little apprehended, even by God's true people. Recent circumstances, indeed, have made many suspect that a conflict, which they anticipated not, threatens them: but still few apprehend what is written in the Scripture respecting the great confederacy that is to be formed against God and against Truth; or if they apprehend it, they think it distant, and refuse to recognise that it brings into any present moral danger.

Yet whether the hour of the last great confederacy be distant or nigh, it is very evident that before it comes, there will be a concentrated effort of the powers of darkness to make the people of Christ, professing and true, renounce the confession of His Truth. And there will be a vast withdrawal. (ὑποστολη.) Are there no tokens of such "withdrawal" around us now? Do we not see an increased disposition to relinquish truths hitherto accounted precious? The words, "the righteous by faith shall live," at the time of the Reformation, made thousands of hearts thrill: but how are they regarded now? They are despised: or else nullified by false expositions. Few are willing to allow that the one atonement does by itself alone *save*—that it alone gives the *title* to all blessing—all glory. Forms of sound words are despised. The result is, a being

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tossed to and fro—an indecision and unsettlement of mind that argues that the soul has not been proof against the seducing power of falsehood that prevails and is to increase, till the fulness of the ενεργεια πλανης, "the energy of deceptiveness or bewilderment" come. At an hour like this, therefore, should there not be a godly fear, and a desire to be under the protection and control of that "strong hand" that is able to keep from the path of withdrawal, and to cause us to abide in Christ? The true people of Christ have a commandment to abide—"and now little children abide in Him," 1 John ii. 28: but what is more, they have also a promise that they shall abide. See 1 John ii. 27. That which the Seducer assails as falsehood we are able to say, "we know as Truth;" and that by means of the unction from above. Of this knowledge we cannot be dispossessed. No power of man or of Satan can take it from us. "We know him that is true:" and in Him we shall abide. As to this, the promise to every believer is fixed and certain. Nevertheless, carelessness and a lack of stedfastness may entail chastisement and many sorrows even on them whom God's faithful grace may preserve from final apostasy.

Verses 14 and 15.

And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence unto the two houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare unto the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

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For a sanctuary] מִקְדָּשׁ. See Exodus xxv. 8. "Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them." The Sanctuary was the meeting-place of God and of His people in the power of the blessings of REDEMPTION. There we are known in the merits of Another. There we find love from which nothing can separate—glory that eye hath not seen. "Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary." How contrasted the condition of those who know that Sanctuary, and those on whom the hour of Antichrist closes in with its darkness and bewilderment!

Israel were commanded to form the typical Sanctuary and to furnish it. They had to provide the gold and the silver, the blue and the purple, the incense and the spices, and the onyx stones. But in Christ we find all these things provided by the gift of God—all that is known in heaven and in earth as precious, or beautiful, or excellent, or fragrant, is all found in Him—there provided for us, that we might say, "all is ours"—all is for our sakes, and bless God for ever.

To both the houses of Israel.] We often hear it said, that the ten tribes are lost; and many imagine that they were not concerned in the rejection and crucifixion of the Lord, but only Judah. This verse, however, plainly negatives such thoughts. Immanuel was when manifested in the flesh, a stumbling stone "to the two houses of Israel." No words can be plainer. Nor are the ten tribes ever regarded in the Scripture as lost. St. Paul says: "unto which promise our *twelve* tribes

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instantly serving God day and night hope to come." James also writes: "to the *twelve* tribes which are scattered abroad:" words that would not have been used unless many had been converted to Christ out of *all* the tribes. Peter also was an Apostle to the circumcision, and wrote to "the strangers scattered throughout Pontus," &c., most of whom were doubtless converts from the ten tribes. In the Revelation too, in a passage yet unfulfilled, all the tribes, with the exception of Dan, are mentioned. See Rev. vii.

Verses 17 and 18.

Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait for Jehovah that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will wait on him. Behold I and the children which Jehovah hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from Jehovah of hosts, the dwelling-one in Mount Zion.

Among my disciples.] In contrast with blinded Israel when they found Jesus of Nazareth a stumbling-stone; and in yet more terrible contrast with them when they shall gather themselves around Antichrist, and be given over to the darkness of the pit, and seek unto wizards that peep and that mutter—in contrast with Israel in both these conditions, stand the disciples.

What can be more blessed than the place assigned to *them*. Accepted according to the acceptance of the Sanctuary, loved by the Father as "children," and as such committed to the faithful care of Immanuel, they

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stand not only instructed by Him, but associated *with* Him during the day of conflict and evil, and have committed to them the despised and rejected testimonies of Truth. What place can be more honourable, more blessed than this? In Jerusalem, during the Penticostal period, the testimonies of Truth were maintained not unworthily. But when Israel after long trial hardened themselves in unbelief, the light was taken from them, and went down to sojourn among the Gentiles. See Acts xxviii. 28. There it still tarries. Would that we could say that Truth had prospered there: but it has not prospered. The family of faith do indeed exist: they have not perished: but they have lost their manhood, their vigour, their strength. And what wonder? Have they not despised and renounced their Nazarite separateness unto God?

One can scarcely help being reminded of the history of Elimelech and Naomi. There was a famine in the land of Israel—a dearth of bread. And Elimelech and Naomi left and went down into the land of Moab, and there they "continued." But they prospered not. The manhood of the family perished. Elimelech, Mahlon, Chilion, were all swept away; and weakness and widowhood remained. "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." Christianity during its sojourn among the Gentiles has indeed become widowed and enfeebled.

But before the end, the voice of Truth shall again be heard in the midst of Israel and Jerusalem. It shall be a potent voice; and though the majority shall still re-

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ject, yet many shall hear. Bread shall again be found in the Land of Israel. The voice of the Prophets and of the Apostles shall be again heard to speak in concord. There shall be a pure, pearl-like testimony. The falsehoods of Gentilized Christianity, which have so long prevailed, shall give place to the testimonies of men who shall view things from the stand-point in which the Prophets and Apostles viewed them (that is, through the vista of Israelitish promise, and Israelitish hope) and who shall find in the New Testament the complement, not the reversal of the promises of the Old. They shall bring out of their treasures, "things new AND old," and shall display them in the harmony in which Scripture unites them. The new things made known to Paul, or Peter, or John, did not nullify or destroy former promises made to Abraham, or David, or Daniel. Addition and augmentation—not nullification, is the principle of God.

So far as there has been any advance in light during the last forty years, it has resulted from a renewed apprehension, graciously vouchsafed, of the place that Israel occupies in the Divine arrangements. We have gone back, as it were, into the Iraelitish circle whence all our blessings have flowed. To them "pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." Rom. ix. 4. Standing within the Israelitish circle, as by the side of Paul and of John, we

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are there enabled to view aright the past and the future, to discern the harmony of prophetic and apostolic truth, to estimate the darkness that has spread over Gentilized Christianity, and we have fed, so to speak, on the corn of Israel's Land while that Land yet remains dark and desolate.

The effect of this return from the mists and darknesses of Gentilized Christianity to the Apostolic view-point, can only be appreciated by those who have experienced the change. It has brought light where there was darkness: riches where there was poverty; and substituted for the dreamy expectations of ignorance and folly, hopes based on the sure promises of the Word of God. It is not too much to say, that the teachers of Christendom, age after age, have quenched or nullified every truth taught in the eleventh of the Romans respecting the Abrahamic olive-tree, and the relation of the Jewish and Gentile branches thereunto. We cannot wonder, therefore, that every attempt to unveil the future of Israel, and to re-open the well-springs of Israelitish promise is regarded by many much in the same way as Haman regarded Mordecai. Haman-like principles and feelings will no doubt abound more and more as the end approaches. Yet they who like Mordecai remember the destinies of Israel, will never bow to Haman, however proud his strength—however great his glory. They may suffer for awhile; but they shall overcome and triumph at the last. The principles of Mordecai shall stand when those of Haman perish for ever.

But while many like Haman hate, others like Orpah,

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too languid and indifferent either to hate much or love much, kiss the returning Naomi and depart—thinking it better wisdom to retain the present realities of Moab, than to trust themselves to the contingencies of an uncertain future. Nevertheless, there are a few who shall continue to love Naomi, and shall refuse to abandon her, and so shall find their way to the harvest-fields of Him whose name is STRENGTH.

When the time comes for "the understanding ones" (המשכילים see Dan. xi. 35.) again to appear in the midst of Israel, these things will be more developed and better understood.

And I will wait for Jehovah.] For a similar use of חכה (Pihel) followed by ל, see Hab. ii. 3. "Though it tarry, *wait for* it." It is a word that implies the patient expectation of one who waits for the action of another. See also Zeph. iii. 8. "Therefore, *wait ye upon* me, saith Jehovah, until the day that I rise up for the prey."

And I will wait on him.] The rendering in our English version "look to," sufficiently gives the sense of קוה. It is a word that implies observancy of another whom we are seeking to serve and to please. See Ps. xxvii. 14. "*Wait on* the Lord: be of good courage: . . . . . *wait*, I say, *on* the Lord." In this passage *to wait for*, חכה, has a future; קוה a present reference. He who describes Himself as *waiting for* Jehovah, did also, whilst waiting *for* Him, wait *on* Him.

The rendering given of this clause by the Sept. is

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πεποιθως εσομαι επ' αυτῳ—a loose, and indeed incorrect rendering. Yet many have supposed that the quotation of the Apostle in Heb. ii. 13 is hence derived. But this is evidently a mistake. The quotation of the Apostle is doubtless taken from 2 Sam. xxii. 3, where the Hebrew words are אחסה בו, *there* rightly translated by the Sept. πεποιθως εσομαι επ' αυτῳ.

Verses 19 and 20.

*And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto the Ohvoth,** (ad Pythonicos) *and to the wizards that peep and that mutter, should not a people seek unto its God? For the living* [should it seek] *to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according* [or if there be a speaking not according†] *to this word, he* (who so speaks) *is one to whom there is no dawn.*

For the living.] That is, on behalf of the living. See the account of Saul going to the witch of Endor in order that he might (as he thought) call up and consult the dead. Necromancy is even now resorted to by many, and as the latter day draws nigh will be abundantly practised. Not that the dead are really raised; but evil spirits personate them. The witch of Endor did not expect to raise Samuel, but intended that her familiar spirit, or Ohv, should personate Samuel, and answer Saul's questions. When God really sent Samuel she was terrified.

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* See page 74. † See note ‡, page 255.

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To the law and to the testimony, &c.] Our appeal is always to be to the written revelation of God now given in its completeness. To them who refuse to be tested by this test, there is no morning. They are of the darkness, and into darkness will depart. The word used here never means light simply (אוֹר): it means always "morning," "the light of the dawn."

When Antichristianism shall have established itself fully, and when deceiving signs and wonders shall abound, how will they who fear God appreciate the mercy of having Holy Scripture left as the sure, unfailing test, whereby they may try all things. There will be many a deceiver who will speak, even as now, great swelling words of vanity; but their words will not bear the test of the Word of God, and so the poor of the flock will be able to detect the falsehood (however attested by supernatural power) and will boldly say;—These men are not of God: for them there is no morning-light.

Throughout the long course of retrocession from God trodden by Christendom, the distinctive mark of God's faithful people has been adherence to the Scripture. Even the true Church may become corrupt. It may wander far from Truth, and be a deceiving guide. But the Scripture remains the one unchanged witness for God: the purity of whose light knows no abatement. Some speak as if they thought that the Holy Ghost should be magnified above the Scripture. But it is not so. The authority of the Holy Ghost and of the Scripture are equal. The words of the Scripture are the words of the

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Holy Ghost; consequently, as is the authority of the one, such is the authority of the other. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,"* and is able not only to make wise unto salvation, but also to make the man of God "throughly furnished" unto every good work. How great this mercy! What a holy independency it gives to the God-fearing soul! How it frees from the cruel bondage of religious tyranny. The Truth maketh free, and to all God's believing people, ability is given by the creation of the new man in them, and by the indwelling of the Paraclete, to come to the light of the Word of God.

The incessant effort of Satan has ever been to quench this light. The chief instrument that he has hitherto employed for this purpose is *Ecclesiasticism*, which bids us look, not to the voice of the Spirit in Holy Scripture, but to the voice of the Spirit *in the Church*. Every system in which this principle lurks, however modified its form, has entered the path of Apostasy.†

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* Such is the right translation of this passage, though it has been cavilled at. See remarks on this subject in "Occasional Papers," No. 1, p. 27.

† The statement of this great principle of Ecclesiasticism is thus made by Dr. Manning in his recent work on "The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost:"—

"To submit to the voice of the Holy Spirit *in the Church* is the absolute condition to attain perfect knowledge of revelation." p. 9.

The present condition of sacerdotal Christendom attests the ruin which this principle has wrought. We may with safety say that neither Paganism, nor Judaism, nor Mahomedanism, afford more terrible examples of subjection to the power of hell than are

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The other great engine of Satan is *Rationalism*. Ecclesiasticism and Rationalism are at the present moment dividing society around us. Both lead into a place of distinct rebellion against God, because they both take from Holy Scripture that place of *supreme* and *exclusive* authority which God has assigned to it. Both these systems, therefore, withdraw men from the only true light. They are working now with vastly increased

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found in the history of the Sacerdotalism of Christendom, especially its Roman branch. It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for them.

Rationalism is defined by Dr. Manning thus: "The perfect or fully developed Rationalism is founded on the assumption that the reason is the sole fountain of all knowledge relating to God, and to the soul, and to the relations of God and of the soul. This does not mean the reason of each individual, but of the human race, which elicits from its intellectual consciousness a theology of reason, and transmits it as a tradition in the society of mankind." p. 7.

High pretensions these! In the one case, we have the collective voice of the Church speaking in the power of the Holy Ghost: in the other, the collective voice of humanity. In the one case we have the theology of Ecclesiasticism transmitted as a tradition in the society of the baptized: in the other, a theology of reason transmitted as a tradition in the society of mankind. Such are the two great present lies of Satan. We have not, however, to expect that the theories of either of these two systems will be carried out according to the hopes of their respective adherents. The cold, selfish, fox-like ecclecticism of Secularism (the child of the popular will) will no doubt use them both, selecting such of their principles as it may deem most conducive to the promotion of its own godless ends. So will be inaugurated that final system which Antichrist will with transcendent, because superhuman, ability work. The DEVIL shall give him "his power, and his throne, and great authority." Rev. xiii. 2.

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activity, and are preparing society for that last great lie of Satan of which Antichrist is to be the embodiment.

Oh! that God might be pleased to awaken His true people to an apprehension of the character of the present conflict, and of their own need. In order to use the Word of God effectually, they must understand it. Do they understand it? The sword, and the only sword, which the Spirit puts into our hand, is the Scripture. Therefore it is called "the sword of the Spirit." We cannot fight without it. What if we despise it? What if we spend our energies in blunting it? What if we turn to other weapons?

It would be well if Christian parents would remember the circumstances in which their children, if not themselves, are about to be placed. The slumber of ages is being broken in upon. The principles of God as revealed in Scripture, and the principles by which Satan works, are being brought out into sharper and sharper antagonism. The people of God will find it needful to abandon half-principles and Jehoshaphat-like alliances with evil men. Walls built with untempered mortar will not stand. The people of Christ need the pure full light of Holy Scripture; and to this God is now seeking to separate them, that they might meet the fierce onset of the foe with their loins girded—girded about "with Truth." What if, at an hour like this, Christian parents should see their children seeking to the Word of God, and to the paths which it opens: will they withstand them? Will they covet

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for their children smoother and more honourable ways? Will they say that they shall not "lose their lives in this world;" that they shall not go without the gate to bear the reproach of Truth, but that they shall follow where Society leads? Let them then read the concluding verses of this chapter. *There* we find the doom of those who adopt and carry out to their legitimate end the favoured principles of this present hour. How different the path of those "of whom the world is not worthy," whose record in heaven shall be, "they overcame because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death."

True indeed it is (and we bless God for it for ever) that *the title* of the redeemed to glory is complete. It is found wholly in the merits of Immanuel, the righteousness of our God and Saviour. Grace has founded it thereon, and it standeth fast for ever. He has "made us meet* to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." But shall we not desire also to be practically ready—to be *ενθετοι* as well as *ικανοι*—for the kingdom of God? Shall we not seek to be found in a right practical relation to the evil that struggles within us, and the evil that dominates around us?—not compromising, not yielding, but withstanding. Surely we would desire to be found in our right appointed place in the army of the Lord; not flying before, nor dallying with, the foe. Some make realiza-

* See Colossians i. 12. *Ευχαριστουντες τῳ πατρι τῳ ἱκανωσαντι ἡμας.*

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tion of their acceptance in Christ the great point of attainment in spiritual life: others, the realization of our being risen with Christ and seated in Him in heavenly places: but the apprehension of both these things (blessed as it is, and needful) is but the means to an end. The present end of Christian attainment is fellowship with Christ *here*. The highest of all present experiences is given in such a verse as the following: "if a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode WITH him." (John xiv. 23.) How great, therefore, must be the error of those who seek wholly to abstract believers from the circumstances of earth, and speak contemptuously of truths and precepts intended for the guidance of the redeemed *here*. Earth, not heaven, is the present place of our conflict and service. We are indeed heavenly in Him who is risen to be our head and representative and fore-runner in the heavens: but we are heavenly persons left on earth with light sent down from heaven to guide us that we might therein view both evil and good, and act according to that knowledge, till the day of evil ends. Shall we despise heavenly light because it is shed on earthly things? Then we must despise the place which the disciples occupy in the passage before us. We must despise all the instruction of this most blessed chapter.

VERSES 21 and 22.

And he shall pass through it [the Land] *hardly bestead and hungry: and it shall be that when he is hun-*

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gered he shall fret himself and curse by his king and by his God and shall look upward. And to the earth he shall look, and behold woe, and gloom, dimness of anguish. But the thick darkness is dispelled.

He shall curse by his king, &c.] So Cocceius, who rightly observes that the verb קלל does not elsewhere take the preposition ב as a connective. Contrast the closing words of Ps. cxxix. 8. "We will bless you in the name of Jehovah." They who serve Antichrist will curse, and be accursed—they who serve Jehovah shall bless and be blessed.

And to the earth he shall look.] The previous clause places the apostate in the Land of Israel. Through it he passes hardly bestead and hungry, for on the Land of Israel will fall that tribulation the like to which has never been. But that unequalled season of tribulation on Israel will end by a visitation which will include the whole earth. As soon as "the times of the Gentiles" are fulfilled (not before) "there shall be signs in the sun, and moon, and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and of the surge (εν απορια ηχους θαλασσης και σαλου) men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking for those things that are coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." Thus whether men look to the heavens above, or to the earth beneath, all will be terror. This is exactly the scene pourtrayed in the passage before us.

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But the thick darkness is dispelled.] Abrupt transitions like this are much more frequent in the Prophets and Psalms than is commonly supposed. Compare Ps. xxii. 21.

"Save me from the lion's mouth
And from the horns of the buffaloes—
Thou hast answered me."

Dr. Alexander, after having noticed other proposed renderings of the passage before us, adds: "Another construction is the one proposed by J. D. Michaelis, who connects מנדח with מעוף, and puts the latter in construction not only with צוקה but also with אפלה, 'the dimness of anguish and of gloom is dissipated.' This construction is recommended by its freedom from grammatical anomalies, and by its rendering the use of כִּי at the beginning of the next verse altogether natural. The objections to it are, that it violates the accents; that it makes the Prophet speak of the darkness of darkness (but see Exodus x. 22); and that the transition from the threatening to the promise is, on this supposition, too abrupt. Either of the two constructions last proposed may be preferred without materially affecting the interpretation of the passage. Hitzig modifies that of Michaelis by taking the last word separately—*it is dispelled!*"

Whether the rendering of Hitzig or of Michaelis be adopted, or that which I have given, the general sense is the same; and the connexion with the next verse preserved. Neither the accentuation nor the pointing

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of the Hebrew have Divine authority, and therefore cannot be accepted as a certain guide.

ISAIAH IX.*

VERSE 1.

For there is not darkness for her [the land of Israel, or the daughter of Zion] *for whom there is distress. According as the former time debased* [made contemptible and vile] *the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, so the latter hath brought glory to the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.*

For there is not darkness, &c.] The daughter of Zion may know distress, even bitter anguish, but she is not to have darkness—that darkness which the former verse has described, as her portion. It is to be dispelled for *her*, and the light of the morning, bright and blessed, is to arise on her for ever.

VERSE 2.

The people—those walking in darkness saw a great light: the dwellers in the land of the shadow of death, light beamed upon them.

The people . . . . saw a great light.] It is not unfrequent in the prophecies to find in the midst of descriptions of the future, references to the past suddenly

* In the Hebrew Bible, that which in our Bible stands as the first verse of the ninth chapter forms the last verse of the eighth.

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introduced. This is especially the case when the future events described are results of the event referred to in the past. So is it here. The light of future joy would never visit the land of Israel unless it had already shone in the manner in which it once did shine in Nazareth and in Galilee. Israel would never behold their Messiah-King in His glory, unless He had already been Jesus the Nazarene accomplishing through suffering that work of redemption from which all their coming blessedness flows. The past is referred to because it is the ground-work of all the coming blessedness of the future.

For other examples of this, see Zech. xiii. 7, where, after a prolonged description of Israel's yet *future* deliverance, the *past* redemption on which that deliverance rests is suddenly referred to—"Awake O sword, against my shepherd," &c. So also Is. liii. in its relation to the preceding chapter, which is a chapter that treats of Israel's yet future glory, but is based on the accomplished suffering and death of the Holy One described in the fifty-third chapter. See likewise Is. xxviii. 16. "Behold I am the layer in Zion for a foundation, a stone," &c. This has been done. The tried foundation stone has been laid. But these words are suddenly introduced in the midst of a passage which refers to future woes yet to come, when Israel shall form its covenant with hell, and give themselves over to Antichrist.

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Verses 3 and 4.

Thou didst [of old] *multiply the nation, but not increase the joy: they* [now] *rejoice before thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden and the rod of his shoulder, and the staff of his task-master hast thou broken as in the day of Midian.*

Thou didst multiply, &c.] There is not the least reason why we should alter the reading of this passage and read לוֹ for לֹא. In Solomon's time the nation was wonderfully multiplied: but did the joy increase? Did it not wane, and at last depart? But when the joy comes to them that the true Solomon shall bring, it shall abide. "Be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." See Is. lxv. 18.

As in the day of Midian.] The light that really dwells in every saint (for Christ is in them the hope of glory, though they be but earthen vessels, 2 Cor. iv. 7) is no more discerned by men than was the light hidden in the pitchers with which Gideon met the hosts of Midian. Great was the terror of the hosts of Midian when the earthen pitchers were broken and the light within suddenly flashed upon them: but greater far will be the terror of those who shall find themselves suddenly confronted by the brightness of heavenly light and glory in the person of Christ and of His raised or changed saints. So will it be in that Day, which the day of Midian feebly foreshadowed.

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Verse 5.

For all the armour of him that is in the tumult [of battle] *mailed, and the garment rolled in blood, shall be for burning: food of fire.*

For all the armour, &c.] This verse indicates not only the destruction that is to fall on those, weak or strong, who are then to be destroyed, but it marks also that wars shall be made to cease. "Come, behold the works of Jehovah, what desolations He hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire." Ps. xlvi. 8.

Verses 6 and 7.

For a child hath been born to us, a son hath been given to us: and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. To the increase of the government and to the peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to establish it and to confirm it in judgment and in righteousness from henceforth and for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts shall perform this.

His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, &c.] If the need of the earth is to be adequately met, if its wound is to be healed, if ever it is to be governed according to God—power, and wisdom, and strength, and glory, like unto that which this verse describes

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must be found in him who governs it. Men are accustomed to talk with a light and sinful flippancy about government: but how little they know what right government involves. How little do they know what it is to govern in the fear and in the knowledge of God. It requires the wisdom and holiness of God so to govern. There can be no right government otherwise: and until right government is supplied, the misery of the earth will deepen day by day, and the gulph become wider that separates it from truth, from peace, from blessing, and from God.

Blessed will be the hour when the veil shall at last be rent from the heart of Israel, and they shall no longer refuse to own the child that hath been born to them, the son that hath been given to them. Then "the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" shall come. Then shall "His way be known upon earth: his saving health among all nations." Therefore His people say, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

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NOTE ON THREE QUOTATIONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT, FOUND IN HEBREWS II. 12, 13.

Before concluding these remarks on Is. viii., it may be desirable to notice a quotation made from it (see verse 18) in the second chapter of the Hebrews, as well as two other quotations with which that quotation is associated —one from Ps. xxii. 22; the other from 2 Sam. xxii. 3.

The object of all these quotations is to show the attestation afforded in the Old Testament Scripture to the brotherhood and oneness of Christ with His people. "He that sanctifieth* [i.e. Christ], and they who are sanctified [i.e. His believing people], are all of one:†

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* Compare Heb. x. 10. "*Sanctified* by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once." And Heb. xiii. 12. "Jesus that he might *sanctify* the people by his own blood," &c.

† Some understand the words ἐξ ἑνος to mean, of one parentage, or one Father. Compare John xx. 17. "My Father and your Father, my God and your God." *He* being the Son essentially and eternally: we being sons by grace and regeneration.

Others take the words ἐξ ἑνος adverbially. Compare *ουκ εξ ισου εσμεν, we are not on equal terms*; and *εξ απροσδοκητου unexpectedly*. So ἐξ ἑνος—*one-wise; on terms of oneness*. In either case the passage *strongly* affirms the brotherhood and oneness of Christ with His redeemed people.

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for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, *I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the church* [or congregation, קהל] *will I sing praise unto thee.* And again, *I will put my trust in him.* And again, *Behold I and the children which God hath given me.*"

The first quotation is from Psalm xxii.—that Psalm which the Lord Jesus appropriated to Himself in the midst of His bitter agony on the cross. Commencing with words of anguish, it ends with thanksgiving and praise. But observe the relation in which Israel stood to Him in the day of His sorrow.

"Many bulls have compassed me,
Strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.
They gaped upon me with their mouths
As a ravening and roaring lion.

. . . . . .

For dogs have compassed me,
The assembly of the wicked have enclosed me.
They pierced my hands and my feet.

. . . . . .

But be not thou far from me, O Lord;
O my strength, hast thou to help me.

. . . . . .

Save me from the lion's mouth
And from the horns of the buffaloes.
THOU HAST HEARD ME."*

* See Hebrew: and remarks of Alexander, Hengstenberg and Perowne, in their respective commentaries.

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After these words, the Psalm suddenly changes from bitterness to joy. Expressions of anguish give place to anticipations of rejoicing faith, and the description passes on to that still future hour when Israel shall no longer be "an assembly of the wicked," piercing Him, and ravening on Him, but when they shall gather around Him as His brethren, and He stand in their midst praising Jehovah.

"I will declare thy name unto my brethren,*
In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.
Ye that fear Jehovah, praise him,
And ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him,
And fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

. . . . . .

My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation,
I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

. . . . . .

All the ends of the world
Shall remember and turn unto Jehovah,
And all the kindreds of the nations
Shall worship before thee,
For the kingdom is Jehovah's,
And he is the governor among the nations.
All that be fat on earth shall eat and worship;
All that go down to the dust shall bow before him;
And whosoever failed to keep his soul alive." †

* Contrast the period of which He said, "I am become a stranger unto my brethren."

† See Hebrew, and notes of Alexander and Hengstenbergh.

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No one, I suppose, who believes what the Scripture teaches respecting the millennial reign of the Messiah of Israel, will doubt that the verses I have just quoted belong to that still future period. They have not yet been accomplished. It is true, indeed, that we who now believe are His "brethren," owned by Him as one with Himself: it is true that He, though unseen, is in the midst of all who are truly gathered in His name. All the spiritual blessings of Israel in the age to come we forestall. The spiritual blessings are the same; but the circumstances altogether different. The mighty-ones [fat-ones] of the earth do not yet eat and worship, i.e. worship in spirit and in truth; nor have "*all the ends of the world* remembered and turned unto Jehovah;" nor does Israel as a people "glorify Him;" nor has Christ as yet, personally and visibly, stood in the midst of the gathered congregation, and there praised Jehovah. Converted Israel will be that Church or Congregation in the midst of which He will thus stand, and thus praise.* They are "the brethren" to whom He will declare Jehovah's name. The first, therefore, of these quotations speaks to us of Israel in the day of their millennial joy; there to be owned by

* See the description of the typical scene when Solomon stood, not indeed in the midst of the congregation (the grace of the *Great* King only takes that place of association) but before, or in the front of (נֶגֶד) the congregation (see 1 Kings viii. 22): "and the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of Israel: (and all the congregation of Israel stood;) and he said, Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel," &c. (1 Kings viii. 14.)

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the Messiah in the day of His manifested glory, as His brethren—a thought most grateful to the heart of a Hebrew; and it was to Hebrews the Apostle was writing. The next quotation speaks also of the same brethren, but in circumstances how different!

"I will put my trust in Him," are the words of the next quotation. They are words ascribed by the Apostle to Christ, and quoted in attestation to the same truth; that is, the brotherhood and oneness of Christ with His people.

This quotation is evidently not, as many have supposed, from Is. viii. 13,* but from 2 Sam. xxii. 3—a chapter containing (as also the 18th Psalm) the words of "the servant of Jehovah—of David who spake to Jehovah the words of this song in the day when

* In the first place, the words of the Sept. are, as I have already said (see note on page 275), an incorrect rendering of the clause in Isaiah, but *a correct rendering of the clause in* 2 *Sam. xxii.* 3. Secondly, if the second and third quotations had been taken from the *same* verse in Isaiah, they would not each have been prefaced by the word πάλιν. Thirdly, if the previous quotation gives prominence to the fact of His brotherhood and oneness with forgiven Israel being declared when He stands in their midst praising Jehovah, is it likely that the equally (we might almost say more) wonderful declaration of that unity which will be afforded in the day of their calamity, when He will make *their* cry *His own*, and when *their* peril shall be regarded as *His* peril—is it likely that such a wonderful proof of His identification with them should be passed over unnoticed, especially when the fact of their deliverance on the ground of their being regarded as one with Him, will form one of the chief subjects of thanksgiving when He shall stand in the midst of them praising Jehovah? Not only the sentiments, but even the words of this marvellous Psalm will, no doubt, be adopted then.

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Jehovah delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul."

But although David's deliverance from the hand of his many enemies, supplied *the occasion* for the writing of this Psalm, yet nothing in David's history can be said to have fulfilled it. David was a Prophet, and as such, was caused by the Holy Ghost to speak of the deliverance and exaltation IN THE EARTH of a greater than himself.

David could plead no merits of his own as the ground of his deliverance. He could not say, "The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his judgments were before me: and as for his statutes, I did not depart from them. I was also upright before him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity.* Therefore the Lord hath recompensed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness in his eye sight."

* Not His own iniquity, for Christ had none. He was without blemish, and without spot. All His proclivities were towards God and against sin. But here, as elsewhere (see Ps. xl. 12), He speaks of the iniquity of His people, for which He had come to make satisfaction, as His iniquity. Dr. Phillips observes: "In some MSS., according to Kennicott, it is מֵעֲוֹנִים, *from the wicked*, which difficulty, he observes, removes all difficulty in applying the verse to Christ." See also *De Burgh*. It is better, however, to adhere to the present reading, and explain this verse on the same principle as that on which we explain Psalm xl. 12. "The Messiah," says Bishop Horsley, "perpetually calls those iniquities His own of which He bore the punishment."

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David could use no such words as these. He was a sinner,—justified as ungodly—having to speak of the "blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works." He could plead no righteousness of his own as the ground of merit and reward. That place belongs only to Immanuel.

Nor could David say that he had so triumphed over his enemies that they were finally and effectually crushed. On the contrary, with his dying lips he owned that the sons of Belial were too strong for him, and that a hand mightier than his own was needed to grasp them and utterly to burn them with fire in the same place. See 2 Sam. xxiii. 7. Contrast with this confession of his weakness, the words in which he describes in this song the final triumph of the great King of Israel. Read 2 Sam. xxii. from verse 38 to end. Not only is the deliverance spoken of in this passage founded on the merit of Him who is delivered, but it is a complete and lasting deliverance, followed by a manifested exaltation in the earth, supreme and lasting over all nations. Has this been accomplished? Or can it be accomplished in the exaltation of any one saving the great Head of Israel?

But it may be said, Does not this Psalm describe the condition of the person delivered, as being at the time of his deliverance, one of danger and anguish? Can Christ be in such circumstances? Can He be described as compassed by the waves of death, or made afraid by the floods of ungodly men? *Personally* indeed He cannot: for He is seated on the right hand of the majesty

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in the heavens glorified for evermore. All power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. The majesty and glory of the throne of the Most High God is His majesty and His glory. But what if Christ be one with His brethren? What if He regards their sorrows as His sorrows; their persecution as His persecution? "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?" "Inasmuch that ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto ME." If this be the relation in which He stands to His brethren, then although Christ *personal* may be, and is glorified, above the heavens; yet Christ *mystical* still remaineth below, the subject of sorrow, persecution, and distress; weak in the midst of many enemies. So we can well understand the principle on which the Apostle quotes the words of this Psalm, and ascribing them to the Lord Jesus, uses them in proof that He recognises His people as His brethren one with Himself.

At what period then will any of the mystical body of Christ be found in circumstances of danger and anguish such as this Psalm describes? Who are they that are described as compassed about by the sorrows of Hades and prevented by the snares of death? (verse 5.) I answer, such will be the condition of the elect spared remnant of Israel at the moment of their forgiveness. Hosts that are, it is said, to be gathered by "spirits of devils working miracles," (Rev. xvi. 14) will compass them. They will be as a bird in the snare; as prey in the mouth of the devourer, when suddenly, Jehovah in sovereign grace shall hear their despairing cry; shall

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rend the veil from their heart; "open" (to use the language of Scripture) "His eyes on" them; place them under the efficacy of the atoning blood of Jesus, and they stand identified with Christ; His merits, their merits; their sorrows, His sorrows; their enemies, His enemies. See how He appropriates to Himself their circumstances. "When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; the sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me; in my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears. Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen upon the wings of the wind. And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies. Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled. The Lord thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice. And he sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them. And the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the rebuking of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils. He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters; he delivered me from my strong enemy, and

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from them that hated me. They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the Lord was my stay. He brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he delighted in me." 2 Sam. xxii. 5—20.

There is no hyperbole; no poetic exaggeration in this description. The intervention from above by which Israel will be delivered will be truly such as is here described. Each word shall be fulfilled. And it is they who are thus marvellously delivered who shall afterwards form that congregation in the midst of which their King and their Deliverer—their once rejected, but then acknowledged BROTHER—the true Joseph, shall stand, and with them praise Jehovah. Of their songs of thanksgiving, this shall be pre-eminently one.

Yet great as is the mercy and grace shown to those who shall prove that wondrous deliverance, and great as will be the glory and the joy granted to them and others in the millennial earth, yet there is another portion of the Church* whose place though circumstantially very different during the time of their militancy in the earth, is nevertheless, one of even higher privilege and honour. For they who constitute the family of faith during the present dispensation, whilst having the same *spiritual* blessings that will be vouchsafed to Israel in the day of

* I use the word "Church" advisedly. It is a word which, in its eternal sense, includes *all* the redeemed. The Church of the first-born ones (*των πρωτοτοκων*) which will rise in "the first resurrection," are only a part of that one body that will in the new heavens and earth be known as the mystical body of Christ, and which will include the redeemed of *all* dispensations.

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their forgiveness, have also the added honour of suffering *for and with* the gospel of Christ. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God." The delivered remnant of Israel will indeed suffer, but not for the gospel's sake: they will suffer for their own sin in having rejected the gospel; and then, like Paul, will be saved by a miracle of grace. Nor will millennial Israel and others in the millennium be called to suffer *with* the gospel, because the time of the triumph and supremacy of Truth will have come. "Sorrow and sighing shall flee away." But it is otherwise with those of whom it is said, "Behold, I and the children whom Jehovah hath given me are for signs and for wonders," &c. They are called to suffer for and with the Truth. It is their distinctive honour. To this separated company—this "little flock," associated with Christ during the day of the strength of evil, we belong. They who were called into this honoured association with their Head, were *first* gathered out of Israel, but sovereign grace subsequently incorporated elect Gentiles with them. "Other sheep I have that are not of this (the Israelitish) fold; them also I must bring; and there shall be one flock (ποιμνη) and one shepherd." This little body, though divided and weakened, and having no longer the miraculous power which accredited their early testimony, have, nevertheless, the light of Truth still amongst them, and are thereby still a moral sign to Israel. But if Israel despised that light when it shone

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in unity, and brightness, and power, no wonder that it should be despised now, when it shines in feebleness. Yet light is light, whether it shines in feebleness, or in strength: and they who cleave to it in the day of its weakness, shall not be separated from it in the day of its refulgence and glory.

Thus then, under these three quotations are comprised the three periods into which the earthly history of the Church divides itself, during this and the millennial dispensations. The *first* quotation refers to that which is in fulfilment *last;* viz., the period of the Church's millennial rest. It leads us on to the Day of God; the blessed end being thus presented to us before we hear of the antecedent sorrow. The *second* refers to that wondrous and momentous hour when the Day of man, whilst evolving all the plenitude of its darkness, is suddenly met by the manifested glory of the King of Israel, and gives place unto the Day of God. The *last* quotation refers to that already lengthened period of suffering and sorrow, during which the children of faith tread their present thorny, yet honoured path.

The Hebrew mind, even when converted, was very indisposed to receive the truth respecting this *present* period. They longed for the time of Messiah-gladness (which they *had* imagined to be nigh) when "sorrow and sighing should flee away." They hoped for the hour when it will be said, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings:" and they would gladly have escaped the necessity of owning that there was also a time (and a prolonged

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time) during which the preacher of "good tidings" has, in sorrow and anguish to say, "Who hath believed our report?" Hebrew Christians and Gentile Christians will yet have experimentally to realize the difference between these two periods; far more than they have ever done during the long period of the slumber of Gentile Christianity.

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EXPOSITORY TEACHING

ON

THE MILLENNIUM

AND

ISRAEL'S FUTURE

BY

BENJAMIN WILLS NEWTON

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PREFATORY NOTE

" Israel's Prospects in the Millennium " and " The Millennium and the Everlasting State " were originally published as separate tracts ; and the remaining papers in this volume appeared in " Occasional Papers on Scriptural Subjects." All the papers, with the exception of that on Zechariah xiv., are now printed as revised by the author for the press.

January, 1913.

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ISRAEL'S
PROSPECTS IN THE MILLENNIUM

READ ISAIAH lx. ALSO PSALMS cxxxi.; cxxxiii.; cxxxiv.

READ the passages referred to. They direct our minds to a far different subject from that which we have recently been considering. We have lately been considering those parts of Scripture which relate to that still future period of Israel's *evil* history, when, after having returned in hardened unbelief to the Land of their fathers, they will there stand as a witness, not of Truth, not of that which God's hand can accomplish for blessing, but a witness of that which Satan can cause the human heart to dare in evil—a witness too of the righteous judgments of God, when He will plead with them with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out. Jerusalem is indeed to be finally "*a praise in the earth*"—her "*walls are to be Salvation, and her gates Praise*"; but before that hour comes she is to be the focus of the earth's evil, the city spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, the city in which Antichrist will reign, the city where the Witnesses of God shall bear their last sackcloth testimony against the earth's evil, the place where the proud power of man will quench that last light of rejected testimony just at the very moment when the light of the Day of God is about to

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dawn. Such is one aspect of the future. But the passages just referred to in Isaiah and the Psalms belong to a far different scene. They belong to the hour when the Redeemer shall have come out of Zion, and turned away ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. xi. 26)—when "*Zion shall have been redeemed with judgment,*" and Jerusalem be called "The city of righteousness, The faithful city." To *her* these words are spoken: "*Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon* THEE: *for behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples: but the Lord shall arise upon* THEE, *and His glory shall be seen upon* THEE" (Is. lx. 1, 2.)—distinctively upon *thee,* at the moment when darkness shall be resting upon all the earth besides. Jerusalem shall be light when the rest of the nations are darkness, and peoples that have not heard the fame nor seen the glory of the God of Israel, shall learn respecting both, through the lips of forgiven Israel (Is. lxvi. 19). "*Her righteousness shall go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth*" (Is. lxii. 1).

And observe how great the glory which this chapter describes as the portion of Jerusalem: how unlike the place hitherto assigned in the earth to the Truth and to the servants of Jesus *of Nazareth!* "*The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.*" Nations shall hear and bow down. All throughout the world shall own that God hath chosen Israel and Jerusalem. They shall be the centre of the earth's government. Wisdom, strength, glory, shall be acknowledged to be there. The good things of creation—all that is beautiful or precious among the things of earth, the gold, the silver, the precious stones, the frankincense, the cedar wood, the marble—things which now the evil

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hand of man grasps, that he might therewith glorify himself and serve Satan, will then be gathered around Israel, to be used by them only for the Lord. All the order and arrangement of life amongst them, whether social, or civil, or religious, shall bear the impress of holiness unto the Lord (see Zech. xiv. 20); and therefore when the multitude of camels and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah shall come and bring to their gates the wealth of the earth, it shall not be used for pride and wickedness, as the Harlot of Babylon will in her day use it, but it shall be used to show forth the praises of the Lord.

Great personal grace will be needed for this. Man has hitherto loved to glorify himself. It is no easy thing, even for the saint, to walk under the sunshine of prosperity. Many who have done well in the furnace of affliction, who have there borne many things and murmured not, but have borne them to the glory of their Lord, have failed when placed in other circumstances, and have shown themselves unable to bear prosperity. But it will be proved in the millennial day that when God's hand reverses the course of the present evil age, and appoints the path of prosperity as that in which His people are to walk, that path will no longer be adverse to spiritual life, but the sphere in which it will flourish. He who strengthened His servant Paul to be willingly as "*the filth of the world and the off-scouring of all things*," can, by like grace, strengthen others (when the appointed time for the exaltation of Truth comes), to be as "*a crown of beauty—a royal diadem in the hand of their God.*" The path of exaltation and glory is indeed very different from that of degradation and scorn: but God's power is sufficient for all things, and one object of His dispensational instruction is to show

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that His "*manifold grace*" is adequate to meet all circumstances, and to cause all things (when His hand moulds them) to show forth His praise.

I need not remind you that there are many other like passages in Isaiah which speak of the outward glory of Jerusalem in the millennial day. When you read these descriptions, remember to contrast them with the picture given in the eighteenth of Revelation, of Babylon—the City of man. There too, all the available resources of earth (so far as man and Satan can command them) are to be gathered: there too, will be seen a mighty system of centralization, around which the civilization of earth is to revolve. There too, nations and tongues and peoples are to be gathered, but not for God, nor for Truth. The glory of Babylon is to be Satan's counterfeit—his substitute for the City of God—a place where he will enshrine falsehood and war against Truth. And what is the symbol by which God has *morally* designated this last great City of human civilization? You will find it in the *seventeenth* chapter of the Revelation. There the same city is described *morally*, which in the eighteenth chapter is described as to her *outward* glory. A woman, arrayed seducingly, "*having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication*"—"*the mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth*," is the emblem of that great and influential system which will morally characterize the last great City of the day of man. But the Scripture also supplies the symbol of that system that shall morally characterize the City of the great King. "*A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars*" (*all* emblems of glories which have their origin in Heaven, not in earth) is the symbol. These emblems are indeed

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prospective, at least as to manifestation. The system of God—in other words, God's truth as revealed in His holy Word, is not now *manifested* thus. Faith may discern its excellency and realize its coming glories; but as regards the earth generally, it is outcast and in reproach. Men see no beauty in it that they should desire it. The harlot of Babylon will be their idol: nor until the hour comes for Jerusalem to arise and shine, will the Truth enter upon the hour of its glory.

The principles of God as revealed in His Word are not isolated, unconnected principles. They form a connected and harmonious system; and that system may be denoted by one word—TRUTH. Men indeed have apprehended little of that system, and what they have apprehended they have loathed; and so, in the stead of Truth, Satan is permitted to construct another system which the harlot of Babylon symbolizes. But which will triumph at the last? Which of these two systems will be established in, and adorn, the City of the great King?

Great and wonderful as the outward glory of Jerusalem will be, yet her chief distinction will be found in her being the city in which Truth is established and maintained in supremacy in the earth. What is there in earth so precious as TRUTH? Truth guides to Christ; establishes in Christ; casts down every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and brings every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. "*To this end*," said the Lord Jesus, "*was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness unto the Truth.*" Could Israel be exalted—could they be made a blessing in the earth apart from Truth? Could the walls of Jerusalem be called Salvation, and her gates Praise, unless she were

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the home and centre of Truth? No! Jerusalem may be the sovereign mistress of the earth; but Truth shall be the sovereign mistress of Jerusalem. The system of God shall rule there, just as the system of Satan shall rule in Babylon.

But TRUTH cannot exist in the earth as an energetic, influential, ruling system, unless it have its servants. It has been the fiction of man to imagine that a body corporately established in the professed place of Truth, is, in virtue of the place it holds, sanctified, even when the individuals that compose that body are corrupt. But it is an idle dream. Associated action is an engine of mighty power; but the character of such association for good or for evil, will depend on the individuals who act. Millennial Jerusalem would soon cease to be the home of Truth if her people were not individually true servants of the King of kings. And here is the importance of remembering the Psalms that I have just read to you. How clearly they mark the character that will individually attach to forgiven Israel in that day. What true lowliness and subduedness of spirit are marked in such words as these—"*Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother. My soul is even as a weaned child. Let Israel hope in the Lord, from henceforth and for ever*" (Psalm cxxxi.). How different from the character which has attached to Israel up to the present hour!—their brow brass—their neck iron—they themselves unbending as the oak, and fierce as the bulls of Bashan. "*Many bulls have compassed Me,*" said the Lord Jesus, "*strong bulls of Bashan have beset Me round.*" But *then* their spirit will be as that of weaned children. They will be

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meek and gentle. They will look only to the Lord. They will have learned the lesson to cease from man; and will say in truth, "*Let Israel trust in the Lord from henceforth, even for ever.*" Observe too their unity. Of them it shall be said, "*Behold how good and blessed a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*"—not a pretended unity—not a unity caused by negation of Truth—not a unity founded on agreement to differ,—not the unity of compromise, but a real unity in the Truth—a being "*perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*" Such unity alone could answer the purposes of God; for His servants are not to stand wavering, doubtful, and undecided in the great contest that is being carried on between falsehood and Truth. They are not by mutual concessions and compromises to sink into neutrality—a neutrality that soon becomes indifference: but they are to be energetic, active witnesses to His Truth. How could they be this *together*, unless they thought together? How could they act or testify *together*, if one declared that to be true, which the other averred to be false? The Spirit of Holiness, and the Spirit of Love, is also the Spirit of Truth. "*I have no greater joy,*" said the Apostle, "*than to see my children walking in the Truth.*" The combination of Truth and Love will mark the habits, testimony, and service of Israel then. The blessing of their God will descend upon them in softening and in fructifying power. The cxxxiv. and similar Psalms, show their power of worship and thanksgiving. "*Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.*" Such words will be living words in the lips of Israel then—not mere expressions, but expressions that show the real, truthful feelings of

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their soul. "*Thy people shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the Land for ever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified*" (Is. lx. 21).

I dwell the more on this, because some have strenuously laboured to depreciate the millennial condition of Israel; as if, in becoming possessed of those outward blessings and outward glory, they were to be debarred from those spiritual blessings now opened to believers in Jesus risen. These writers seem to think that because Israel has rejected Jesus in humiliation, and lost the honour of suffering with the Truth during the time of its rejection in the earth, they have therefore forfeited for ever admission into the full heavenly blessedness of the redeemed. Some have even doubted whether converted Israel will have LOVE, that chiefest of all graces—that necessary concomitant of salvation; for "*he that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*" Strange indeed if they who are to be so peculiarly, in the earth, the constituted monuments of Divine GRACE, should not be brought fully and completely into those relations that GRACE assigns to those whom GRACE has blessed. Shall Israel when re-graffed into their own olive tree, be deprived of the results which necessarily flow from the reception of the sap and fatness of that olive tree? Shall Israel receive at last the Gospel of the grace of God, and be cut off from the results which by God's appointment necessarily accompany the reception of that Gospel?

It is in the Epistles of the New Testament, where the Gospel of the grace of God and the results of its reception as to acceptance and final glory are unfolded—it is there that we learn the blessings that are to pertain to each individual Israelite when the vail shall be taken from their hearts. In the Old Testament we learn the

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sphere in which forgiven Israel will *nationally and corporately* act in the earth: but in the New Testament we learn respecting the power which will make them *individually* what they are as saints, and respecting the everlasting glory which is to be their portion in the new creation, after the millennial heavens and millennial earth shall have passed away. There is one way to Life and to the Father, and that is Jesus; and he who receives Jesus, whether in the present or in the millennial dispensation, is thereby brought unto Life and unto the Father. And as there are not different ways of salvation, but only one way, so also there are certain fixed results of salvation which are the same to *all* the redeemed. When the Scripture says, "*whom He justified them He also glorified*": and again, "*as we have borne the image of the earthy we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*," it reveals no mere temporary truths—true in one dispensation, and not true in another. He that hath Christ hath all things, is an unchanging everlasting truth. These and all other like statements, which reveal the fulness of the grace given in Christ Jesus, are true of the redeemed of every age and every dispensation. What the Epistles reveal respecting the unregenerate heart of man, and respecting the way of forgiveness, and respecting Christ and union with Christ in glory, are everlasting truths as unchangeable as He from whom they flow.

Turn for example to the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. We there find a description of unregenerate man—"*Their throat is an open sepulchre*," etc. No one, I suppose, will deny that this is true of Israel, of whom and to whom it was primarily spoken. We know that it is true of Jew and Gentile alike. And then as to the means of deliverance. Are there two ways of

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deliverance? No; there is only one way, that is, CHRIST. There is one only sacrifice; one great High Priest; one Spirit; one mercy-seat. They who are there known of God are known of Him in covenant mercy and grace—the grace of the New Covenant and all its blessings. But there is no middle place—all else is perdition. Abel, Abraham, David, Paul and every one who in the Millennium shall believe, are alike justified through faith. They are not accepted in the value of their own names. They are accepted by the free grace of God in the value of Another's name. Their acceptance rests *exclusively* on the one oblation once offered. The fragrance of that filled the sanctuary, and under that they all equally stand. Where the TITLE is the same, the results must be the same.

Accordingly such passages as the fifth and subsequent chapters of the Romans reveal what the appointed portion of ALL the justified is. We are there taught not only that they have peace with God, but that they are heirs of His glory—"*they rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*" We are there taught that all who through faith, "*receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life through One, Jesus Christ.*" They are said to be "*married unto Him that is raised from the dead.*" The same passage that tells us that there is to them "*no condemnation,*" tells us also that they are "IN *Christ Jesus,*"—that they are "*joint-heirs*" with Him—that they are "*predestinated to be conformed to His image*" in glory. Such are the results—the appointed necessary results of redemption. Acceptance according to the love wherewith Christ is loved, Life in Christ, union with Christ, are the appointed inseparable concomitants of salvation. They are the consequences of the great fact that He who is

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the Sacrifice and the Priest, is also "*the Beloved Son,*" and likewise "*the Second Man, the Last Adam.*" The forgiven through Christ, have Christ, and therefore all fulness, as their portion. The blessed truth revealed in the fifth of Romans, that all the justified are united with Christ as the last Adam, and that therefore they are brought into the glories of the new creation, is not a mere occasional truth—true in one dispensation, and not in another. It is the fixed appointment of God in Christ, for which all the redeemed of EVERY dispensation shall, in the ages to come, bless the riches of His grace for ever. The millennial saints will be Christians in the same sense in which we are Christians. They will be reconciled through the same atoning Blood as we: they will have the same everlasting Priest: they will have life in Christ risen: they will have within them "*the new man created according to God*": they will receive the same Holy Spirit (for without it, they could in nothing please God): they will have the same union with Christ as the last Adam: the same final change consequent on that union: so that as they have borne whilst on earth the image of the earthy Adam, they will finally bear the image of the heavenly. The New Testament reveals these things as the necessary consequences of salvation. Therefore to exclude from these consequences is to exclude from salvation. The Scripture reveals only *one* salvation. Shall we venture to affirm that there is another?

How then can it be said, as some do say, that there will be millions of believers in the millennial earth, sanctified by the blood of Christ as we are, who will yet never "*reign in life*" as we shall? Such is the doctrine of many. They say that converted Israel and the rest of the millennial saints will have forgiveness

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of sins indeed, but not union with Christ as we have. They allow that converted Israel will be redeemed, but deny that they will thereby be brought into the Church or into the Church's glory. Strange doctrine this! Until now, it has been thought that "*the Church*" in its eternal and heavenly sense, included *all* the redeemed —that it was, in fact, the eternal name of the redeemed. But now, it seems, we are to unlearn this—we are to believe that the greater part of the redeemed (for all the saints of the Old Testament as well as those of the Millennium, are excluded by this system), do not belong to the Church at all. According to this system, Israel, when they believe, will find that they have forfeited for ever the chief results of redemption; and Christ will be divided, that is to say, He will pertain in all His fulness to some only, *viz.*, the saints of the present dispensation: but on the saints of the Old Testament, and on converted Israel in the Millennium, part only of His offices will bear. They are to be partakers of part only of the riches that are in Him.

But is this what the eleventh of the Romans teaches us? Do not we, Gentile believers, derive our present fatness from being graffed into Israel's olive tree? And are not they, when at last the vail shall be taken from their hearts, to be graffed again into that same olive tree? How could this be, if we, by being graffed into it, become partakers of the Church's final blessings, whilst they though re-graffed into it, are excluded from those blessings? In that case it would be a different tree—not the same. But the Scripture declares that it is *the same.*

And how strange the thought that the special and distinctive blessings of redemption should only be given to (comparatively) a few of the redeemed—and not only

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to a few but to a feeble failing few, as they to whom the testimony of Christ's truth among the Gentiles has been committed, have been and are. Grace, it is true, exalts the unworthy; yet still, it would be a strange thing for those whom grace called, and made practically faithful also, amongst Israel of old (such as Abraham, and Job, and Moses, and David, and Daniel) and for those whom grace shall call in Israel to come—it would be a strange thing for such to be excluded in Heaven from blessings to be granted to the present failing Gentile body. Grace loves to widen, not to narrow the circle of its blessings. To exclude therefore any of the redeemed from the Church and the Church's proper glory, is, I repeat, a strange thought, and as contrary to the plain declarations of Scripture as anything that was ever devised by the mind of man. May you beware of this rock. It is one on which many have made shipwreck.

If, indeed, the rest and joy of the Millennium were to be the *final* portion of Israel—if the Church of the first-born, who rise in the first resurrection, were to be admitted into mansions of heavenly glory, but Israel limited to earth and to the flesh for ever, then, indeed, it might truly be said, that they were excluded from the Church's proper blessings. But Israel's *final* hope is not the Millennium. The Millennium is neither an eternal dispensation, nor one of perfect blessing. The scene of the Millennium will not be that *new* earth, in which righteousness shall find an everlasting home, but its sphere will be this present Adamic earth: and Israel in it, though sanctified and blessed, will be still in bodies of flesh and blood, with indwelling sin still in them, against which they will have to watch. They will still feel the force of those words, "*the flesh lusteth against*

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the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." They will feel it the more, because when Satan will no longer be present to tempt, and when the course of the age, instead of seducing *from* God, will rather lead *to* Him, the virulence of that evil principle within, which still tempts and entices to sin and struggles against God, will be more consciously felt and appreciated. Decay, corruption, sin, death, though repressed during the Millennium, will not be extirpated ; and how different is repression from extirpation ! Death, we are told, is the last enemy destroyed ; and although Israel will, through grace, remain faithful to the end and be exalted in the earth without being thereby tempted to lift themselves up against God, yet it will be otherwise with the nations ; and the millennial earth, at the close, will be the scene of an apostasy and of a judgment, the like to which will never before have been seen. Is such an earth to be Israel's final home ? No ; like their forefathers, they will look for "*a City that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*" They will "*look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness*" ; and when *they* shall have been created, the former heavens and earth, even though they have been the scene of millennial blessedness, "*shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.*" The Apostle Peter tells *us* to look forward to those New Heavens and New Earth. The Prophet Isaiah bids Israel do the same. The hope therefore of millennial Israel and of ourselves is the same—not the millennial earth, but, beyond the Millennium—the New Heavens and New Earth.

Nor are the Scriptures silent as to the personal condition of those who shall enter that sphere of glory in the new creation. Think of the 15th chapter of first Corinthians. That chapter expressly treats of the final

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condition of ALL the redeemed: and its testimony is briefly this—that all who are of faith, all the redeemed, are IN Christ. "*As in Adam all die, even so* IN *Christ shall all* be made alive.*" Mark the word IN. They are in Christ as a new covenant Head; and in consequence thereof they will all finally be changed—changed into His likeness, and will then bear the image of the Heavenly even as they have here borne the image of the earthy. The more closely this chapter is examined —the more it is considered textually, the more the truth of this will be made evident. The millennial saints then will finally rise in the heavenly likeness of Christ.

Now think what it is to bear the heavenly likeness of Christ. Think what it is for every thing that characterizes fallen humanity here, as seen in the likeness of the first Adam who was earthy, to be gone, and nothing to remain except the likeness of the Second Man, the Last Adam. Redemption brings to this. They who are not brought unto this are not redeemed. "*Whom He justified,*" saith the Scripture, "*them He also glorified*": and glory is this, the being conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. When God gave to Abraham the sign and seal of circumcision, He thereby signified that separation from the flesh (that is to say, severance from every thing that characterizes us as children of the first Adam) was needful to the final blessedness of the redeemed. Some have erroneously said that circumcision teaches, not the severance of the flesh, but the improvement of the flesh—but can there be a plainer

* That is, all *believers*, for of them only is the Apostle here speaking.

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type of severance ? And does not the Scripture declare that the flesh is incurably evil, and that therefore God separates them from it, and from all that they have known as children of the first Adam below ? And how does He separate them ? By the death and resurrection of Christ ; and by giving them union with Christ in that death and resurrection. It is thus, as the Apostle teaches us in Colossians ii.—it is thus that we are "*circumcised with the circumcision made without hands*" —it is thus that we are separated from the flesh, and thus we are brought into that new sphere of heavenly being into which Christ, as our new covenant Head has entered. May you beware of ever seeking to depreciate the final blessedness of the redeemed. None of the redeemed, either in the millennial dispensation or any other, will ever be "*satisfied*" until they awake up in the likeness of their risen Lord.

During the Millennium, the only persons who will bear that heavenly likeness will be those who will have risen in the first resurrection. But the very words "*first* resurrection" imply that there is another resurrection to follow. Accordingly, at the close of the Millennium, the millennial saints will also rise in "*the resurrection of life,*" and will also bear the image of their risen Lord ; and, in the New Heavens and New Earth, will be seen united to those who have gone before—there forming one redeemed body. It is not true, therefore, to say that the Church will be complete at the commencement of the Millennium. "*The Church of the first-born ones*" (*των πρωτοτοκων*) will, but that very expression "*first-born ones*" shows that there are others to follow after. "*The Church of the first-born ones*" is only a part of the Church. It includes all who have been numbered among the family of faith up to the

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hour when the Lord Jesus shall return in glory. Abel, Abraham, David, Paul, will alike be there. Diverse have been their trials, their knowledge and their experience here—diverse their dispensational position and privileges; but all these differences will vanish before that mighty power of oneness which is found in Christ their Head. By it they will be brought into equal likeness to Him, and therefore into likeness one to the other. The earthy characteristics of *all* will alike be "*swallowed up of life.*" Consequently, their understandings, their affections—in a word, all the inward and outward powers of their being, will be in all alike perfect. Heaven is not to be a transcript of the differences of earth. These differences are the very things that are to depart from before that power of life and unity that has been established for all the redeemed, in Christ. Do we wish to alter the arrangements of God? Shall we seek to make those blessings which God has made dependent on Christ's one oblation dependent, not on Christ, but on the condition of our faith, or knowledge, or experience here? Some have done this. Many have said that Abraham will not be admitted into the same nearness to his Redeemer as ourselves; because, whilst on earth, he had not the same dispensational blessings as we—the light having been then partial and dim compared with that which has been given since the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. It is no doubt true that Abraham had not the same full communion with Truth that Paul had: but does our admission into the Church—does our acceptance according to the love wherewith Christ is loved, and the being conformed to His likeness in glory, depend on what we are in the Spirit, or on what we are in Christ? If they depend on what we are in the Spirit, then the Spirit is,

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in part at least, our Saviour, not Christ alone; for salvation cannot be separated from its results. The "*great salvation*" revealed in the Scripture has certain results in glory, and they who have not the results have not the salvation. Shall we then say that the work of Christ alone is not sufficient to bring unto salvation and its results? By saying this, corrupt Christianity in every age has sought to undermine the gospel of the grace of God.

Ever remember then, that "*the Church,*" in its eternal sense, means *all* the redeemed—all of every dispensation who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. Remember too that there is no redemption apart from union with the person of the Redeemer. Remember these two great truths, and they will be to you as beacons to guard you against those quicksands and shoals of error on which many are making shipwreck. The Scripture teaches that the *Title* of the redeemed to salvation and all the blessings thence resulting is founded *wholly* on the imputation of the meritorious service of their Holy Substitute perfected on the Cross. To reject this great foundation truth is to reject Christianity as revealed in the Scripture. Abel, Abraham, Moses, Peter, Paul and the millennial saints are "*constituted righteous*" by the imputation of a righteousness wrought out and presented to God for them by Another. On the one oblation once offered all their hopes rest. Consequently they have common hopes, common joys. On this great and everlasting truth the "communion of the saints" is founded.

But although the *final* condition of the redeemed, when together brought into the "*New Heavens and New Earth*" will be one, yet they who are not raised, and, consequently, not glorified, until the end of the thousand

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years, cannot of course share with " *the Church of the first-born ones,*" the glories of the millennial reign of Christ. They who rise in the first resurrection will alone share the glories of Christ, during the time that He is subduing all enemies. During the Millennium they only will be the partners of His Throne. Yet great as this blessing is—distinctive as is this honour, it is temporary only. The power of the millennial kingdom, assumed when the Son of man is brought before the Ancient of days to be invested therewith, is to be laid down as soon as He shall have subdued all things, and destroyed the last enemy. It is a temporary dispensation therefore ; and nothing temporary can be weighed in the scale against that which is final and everlasting. The personal glory of the redeemed as made like unto their risen Lord—their " *reigning in life,*" and their employment in the government of God, will not terminate with the Millennium. There are " *ages to come* " —everlasting ages in which He will show " *the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us* "—all His redeemed people—" *through Christ Jesus.*" In those ages they will not cease to " REIGN *in life* "—they will not cease to be kings and priests unto God under their great Melchizedek.

Nor will the sphere specifically intended for the display of the glory of the heavenly city, be prepared until *after* the Millennium. The heavenly city will exist indeed at the commencement of the Millennium ; but during the Millennium it will not have the appointed accompaniments of its glory. The place of its everlasting abode, the sphere and the accompaniments of its glory, are to be found in the " *new heavens and new earth* " ; and *they* are not created until the millennial heavens and millennial earth pass away, and no place is found

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for them (Rev. xx. 11). Accordingly, the heavenly city enters *not* the millennial earth. It descends indeed from Heaven, the dwelling-place of God, so as to be brought into near connexion with the millennial earth; but it is not *in* it. Just as in Israel's temple of old the holy place, where the golden candlestick was, intervened betwixt the external earthly courts and the Holiest of all; so the Heavenly City, where the true candlestick shall be, will intervene, during the Millennium, betwixt the earth and the Heaven of Heavens. During the whole of the Millennium, it is above the created heavens —and is, therefore, called Επουρανιος (See Heb. xii. 22 and xi. 16). But when the Millennium has passed, and the New Heavens and the New Earth are created, it is seen descending again, and then, and not till then, it is said "*The Tabernacle of God is with men.*" Of that hour, it is especially said that she, the Heavenly City, was seen "*prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*" At the commencement of the Millennium (which in the Scripture is regarded as if it were one day) she is termed the Bride, but she is not ushered into her inheritance— the New Heavens and Earth, until after the Millennium has closed. At the time therefore when the last portion of the redeemed shall rise in glory, that is, at the close of the Millennium, the Heavenly City will not have entered upon the special sphere of her glory, and will not have ceased to be called "*the Bride.*"

It has been supposed by some, that because "*the Church of the first-born ones*" enter upon the Church's corporate standing of glory in the Heavenly City at the commencement of the Millennium, therefore no others can subsequently be admitted. They have reasoned on the supposition that when once a corporate position has been formally taken, it is impossible that

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any individuals should afterward be admitted into that position or its privileges. But is it so? Take Israel for an example. Do they not, at the commencement of the Millennium, assume their *corporate* standing in the earth? Are they not at that time regarded as the earthly Bride, married unto the Lord their God? "*Thy Maker is thy husband.*" (Is. liv. 5. See also Is. lxii. 5.) "*Thou shalt call Me Ishi,*" *i.e.* my husband (Hosea ii. 16.) "*I will betroth thee unto Me for ever*" (Hosea ii. 19). Such is the corporate relation of Israel to their God at the commencement of the Millennium. But millions of individuals will be added to Israel and be made partakers of their privileges as the Millennium proceeds. It is, therefore, untrue that the possession of a corporate standing necessarily forbids the addition of individuals. Abundant examples of the reverse may be found both in the arrangements of men and of God. In the *personal* glory of "*the Church of the first-born ones,*" the millennial saints will see an example and pledge of their own *personal* glory: in the *collective* glory of the Heavenly City, they will see an example and pledge of that collective glory which they will finally inherit in the New Heavens and New Earth.

After the Scripture has described the introduction of the Heavenly City into the New Earth, revelation ceases. Beyond that period we cannot go, for Scripture is silent. Of the New Heavens and New Earth however we can confidently say that they will be perfect according to the perfectness of Christ and of God. Nothing that is of the likeness of the first Adam will be found there. This present earth was formed in adaptation to the first Adam who was taken from it; but the New Earth will be made in adaptation to the glory of Him who is the Lord from Heaven. Nothing in the New Earth will

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be unworthy of the heavenly glory of Christ nor of the heavenly glory of the redeemed. Nothing in it will be unsuited to the unearthly glory and holiness of the Heavenly City. It will be as much adapted to the existence of spiritual and glorified bodies, as this earth is adapted to the existence of earthly bodies. Yet this is not the only sphere of the glory of the redeemed. They will have other glories, other mansions in their Father's house above the heavens. "*The name of their God, and the name of the City of their God,*" and the new name of Christ, their Saviour, will alike be written on them. In other words, they shall have title of access not only to the Heavenly City and New Earth, but also into that circle of glory which pertains to God as God, and into that circle of glory which pertains to Christ as the Son of man risen and glorified and made the Head over all things. The prayer of the Lord Jesus as recorded in the seventeenth of John embodies the same truth. True heavenly unity—true heavenly glory is there declared to be the final portion of all who should believe. The words "*bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh,*" involve the same truth. Indeed he who has Christ has all things. And is not Christ the portion of *all* the redeemed?

We must fail in a proper apprehension of revealed Truth if we err respecting the final condition of the redeemed. Hence the importance of seeing that the Millennium is not the *final* sphere. The millennial earth is not the place where the redeemed family of God are to be knit into their final unity of blessing. It is not the place where the flesh will cease to be. It is not the place where the glory of the Bride of the Lamb is to be displayed. It is not "*the dispensation of the fulness of times,*" for (εἰς) which, says the Apostle,

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God will "*gather up for Himself all things in Christ.*" The joy of the Millennium, like the wine at the marriage-feast at Cana, will fail, for black apostasy will mark its close. What if there were no one able to say, "*Behold I make all things new*"? What if the Son of Man were not also the Living God? But He is; and therefore there will again spring light out of darkness—joy out of sorrow—life out of death. All will then be ready to say, "*Thou hast kept the good wine until now.*" It will be joy greater than all former joys—joy too that will never pass away or be in any wise impaired, for the creature will no longer think, or act, or feel, apart from the might and all-sufficiency of the great I AM. God will be "all in all."

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APPENDIX A

NOTE ON DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE MILLENNIAL AND POST-MILLENNIAL EARTH

MANY have found difficulty in distinguishing between the millennial heavens and earth and the New Heavens and Earth, from not observing that the 21st chapter of the Revelation closes the subject with which it commences, at the *eighth* verse. The subject of those eight verses is the "*New Heavens and New Earth*," created after the millennial heavens and earth have "*passed away and no place is found for them.*" They describe also the relation of the Heavenly City to the *new* earth, as descending into it. This description however of the post-millennial state is brief. With the eighth verse it closes: and with that verse the chapter (had it been rightly divided) would have ended; and with the following, that is the *ninth* verse, a new chapter would have commenced.

This new chapter (for such it should be), commencing from the *ninth* verse of chapter xxi. and extending to the end of the *fifth* verse of chapter xxii., recurs (and similar instances of recurrence abound in Scripture) to the period when the Heavenly City first enters on its existence, viz., at the commencement of the Millennium, and describes its relation to the earth *during* the Millennium. This is just what we might expect. The

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Heavenly City holds a certain relation to the millennial earth, as well as to the post-millennial. We might expect therefore that its relations to both would be described. Its relation to the new and perfected earth is *first* described: and *afterward* instruction is given as to the previous relations of the same Heavenly City to an earth not perfected. A proof of this distinction may be found in such a verse as the following—"*The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*" (xxii. 2.) This "*healing*" *must* refer to the millennial earth, for in the New Earth there will be no "*healing*" needed. Again, we read that "*the nations shall walk by means of the light thereof,*"* (xxi. 24) and, "*the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour unto it.*" (24.) This will be true in the millennial earth, but in the New Earth we read neither of nations nor their kings. "*Former things will have passed away.*"

In Isaiah lxv. we find a similar instance of recurrence to the millennial period, after the creation of the New Heavens and Earth had been referred to. In the 15th verse of that chapter rebellious anti-christian Israel is addressed—"*The Lord God shall slay thee* (rebellious Israel), *and call His servants* (forgiven millennial Israel) *by another name; that he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth: and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth: because the former troubles are forgotten and because they are hid from mine eyes.*"

Of the truth of this forgetfulness of former troubles, two great proofs are to be given. The great, final, and everlasting proof is the creation of "*the New Heavens*

* Such is the true reading. *See* Tregelles' Corrected Greek Text.

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and Earth," and accordingly this is mentioned first. "*For behold I create* new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind.*" This is the post-millennial hope of Israel. It is our hope also. See 2 Peter iii. 13. But are Israel to wait until the creation of the "*New Heavens and Earth*" before they can say that joy and gladness is their portion? No; at the commencement of the Millennium, Jerusalem is made "*a rejoicing, and her people a joy.*" They are to be sustained in holiness and blessing (see subsequent verses) by the hand of the Lord their God, and therefore they may rejoice for ever (that is, with a joy never to be interrupted however it may be enlarged) in all that their God createth for their blessing, both then, and when He fulfils His last great promise of creating the New Heavens and New Earth. Israel have a title, corporately, at the commencement of the Millennium to say, "*We will rejoice for ever*"; but the nations, corporately, will not—for among them there is to be a great apostasy at the close (*See* Rev. xx. 8, 9). It is very evident that the scene described in Isaiah lxv. 18, on to the end of the chapter, is in the millennial earth and not in the New Earth. In the New Earth,

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* Literally, "I, the Creating-One of," etc. In Hebrew and in Greek the present participle is thus used to indicate *abstract* existence, or action when regarded *abstractedly*, that is, apart from time, etc. It is especially used in respect of God, whose attributes are essential and unchangeable. These words therefore are not equivalent to "I am creating." They are intended to be ascriptive of creating power without determining the exact moment of its exercise. Compare, "the Son of man, ὁ ων in Heaven." "They are dead οἱ ζητουντες the young child's life." "This is My body το κλωμενον for you."

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there will be no building houses nor planting vineyards —no possibility of death, or of sin, or of curse—no limitation of the days of God's people to the days of a tree—no wolves and lambs feeding together—no serpents feeding on dust. All these things, as mentioned in this passage, will be seen in the millennial earth ; but in the New Heavens and Earth these former things will have passed away (Rev. xxi. 4).

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APPENDIX B

NOTE ON 2 PETER III.

THIS chapter has also been the cause of difficulty to some. It must be remembered that it is not always the object of Scripture to supply *minute* and *detailed* instruction on the subjects of which it treats. Sometimes indeed it speaks specifically and enters into much detail respecting the order and character of the events of which it treats. Not unfrequently, however, it speaks in general terms, and avoids explanation and detail. This is especially the case when its object is not to instruct the watchful and the enquiring, but to arouse the unwatchful and to alarm the careless.

This closing chapter in the Epistle of Peter regards the people of God as surrounded by the delusions and falsehoods of the last days—when many scoffers shall proudly say, "*Where is the promise of His coming?—for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*" Whilst such things are being perpetually sounded in the ears of God's people, and whilst a corresponding iniquity is ripening around them, they need to be continually reminded of the great truth, that although the Lord is long-suffering, though He may long seem to delay—a thousand years being with Him as one day, yet that the Day of the Lord shall come at last, and that in that day all present things shall be dissolved and pass away.

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The mere statement of this great truth in general language is sufficient to guard against the seductions of the scoffer. His assertion is to be confronted with this solemn declaration of God. It is true indeed, that if we were limited to the instruction supplied in this passage, we should know nothing respecting the Millenium; nor anything respecting the order of events in "*the Day of the Lord.*" We should not know whether the dissolution spoken of took place at the commencement, or at the end of that day. We should not know whether it were a prolonged period, or the reverse. Respecting all such things we should have been left in ignorance—the object of the passage being, not to inform as to detail, but to arouse and warn.

From other parts of Scripture however we find that "*the Day of the Lord*" is the name for an extended period. Just as the expression "*man's day*" is used of this present age; so "*the Day of the Lord*" is an expression appropriated to that period during which Christ shall, manifestly and confessedly, be employing His glorious power in order to subdue all enemies. From abundant passages in the Prophets, we know that this visitation of the earth by the power and majesty of Christ, is to be a prolonged period. [See, for example, the use of the words "in that day," in Zech. xiv. throughout.] From the New Testament we learn that it is to be definitely a thousand years.

The moment when the Day of the Lord first breaks on a rebellious and ungodly world will be a time of terror and of fiery judgment. "*The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall*" (Mark xiii. 24, 25). "*They shall say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us*" (Luke xxiii. 30). "*The Lord shall be revealed from*

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heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. i. 7, 8). Thus the Day of the Lord will peculiarly be at its commencement "*a day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*" Yet the progress of dissolution in nature and of destruction among men, will not, at that moment, attain its final end. It will be for a season stayed. The terrors which will thus accompany the coming of the Day of God will be a pledge and an example of the great concluding dissolution of all things: but long-suffering mercy will not at that time make a complete end, and the millennial harvest will be the result of that long-suffering, when millions will be gathered into the garners of God. At the close of the millennial day, the final and complete dissolution will come. That is the period of which it is said, "*I beheld a great white Throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and no place was found for them.*"

And now observe how the language used by the Apostle Peter in this passage adapts itself to these truths as elsewhere revealed. The expressions used are "*the Day of the Lord* IN *the which*" (verse 10), and "*the Day of God* IN CONSEQUENCE OF *which*" (δι' ἣν, verse 12). These are general expressions purposely widened so as to accord with the rest of the Scripture; for the dissolution and destruction which takes place at the commencement of the Day of the Lord, and that which takes place at its close, will equally be "in" it, and "in consequence of" its presence.

Indeed, the coming of the Day of God is the *virtual* termination of all things at the very first moment of its manifestation, and faith so regards it.

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APPENDIX C

IN considering the future condition of Israel, attention has often been directed too exclusively to those parts of Scripture which concern their outward standing and outward blessings in the earth.

We have already seen that every text in the Epistle to the Romans which reveals justification through Christ, and connects such justification with certain necessary consequences, such as, union with Christ as a new federal Head, and the reception of the Holy Ghost and final glory—every such text *must* be true of millennial Israel, because they are justified. Like ourselves they will be " *married unto Him that is raised from the dead* " ; otherwise, they could not bring forth fruit unto God. Like ourselves they will (looked at as regards their standing in Christ) be in the Spirit and not in the flesh ; otherwise, they could not please God. " *They that are in the flesh cannot please God* " (Romans viii. 8).

Again, if we examine the Gospel of John, all the essential unchanging blessings therein revealed will pertain to converted Israel, as much as to ourselves. For example, as having received Christ they will come under such a verse as the following : " *As many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name : which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God* " (John i. 12).

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By faith converted Israel will feed on Christ, therefore they will be included under the blessings of such a verse as this—"*He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him*" (John vi. 56).

Jesus will still be "the true vine"; His believing people the branches. It will be as true of Israel as of ourselves, that "*apart from Me ye can do nothing.*"

They will receive the same Spirit of Truth, otherwise they could not understand the words that Jesus has spoken. "*The flesh profiteth nothing.*"

They will be under all the blessings revealed in the Epistle to the Hebrews—sacrifice, mediation, priesthood and all connected results. In that Epistle too is revealed the great and everlasting truth, that "*He that sanctifieth* (*i.e.*, Jesus) *and they who are sanctified* (*i.e.* believers) *are all of one* [ἐξ ἑνός, onewise, having a character of oneness], *for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.*" If therefore Israel are to be sanctified in and by Christ (and they cannot be sanctified in any other way), then will they be one with Christ, and be His "*brethren.*" *

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* It is remarkable that of the three texts which the Apostle quotes to prove this great truth, that all the sanctified in Christ are the brethren of Christ, the first two are millennial texts referring to the time when Israel shall have been forgiven, and therefore emphatically declaring that redeemed Israel are regarded as the *brethren* of Christ.

It is peculiarly important to notice the quotation of the words, "*I will put my trust in Him.*" They are quoted from 2 Samuel xxii. 3, and are by the Apostle applied to Christ. We have therefore the authority of the Apostle for saying that this Psalm of triumph and thanksgiving belongs not to David, but to Christ. But in what sense can Christ, the antitypical David, be described as surrounded by ravening enemies, and delivered by a visible intervention of Divine power in manifested majesty

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And although it is the more peculiar object of the *Old* Testament to reveal the outward blessings that are to surround Israel in their corporate and governmental position in the earth, yet it by no means passes over unnoticed those personal and everlasting blessings which it is the more peculiar province of the *New* Testament to declare.

Thus the following text from Hosea i. 10, speaks of converted Israel *as the children of God.* "*Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not My people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.*" So also in Jeremiah iii. 19. "*But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly*

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and glory such as the earth has never yet seen? (*see* verses 8 to 18.) It cannot be true of Christ *personally*, that He will thus be surrounded or thus delivered: for He is at the right hand of the Majesty in the Heavens. These things can only be spoken of Christ mystical, *i. e.*, of Christ viewed as one with His believing people; just as is expressed in those memorable words, "*Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?*" Whenever the time shall come for the remnant in Israel to be regarded by God as brought under the blood of reconciliation, instantly they shall be regarded as one with Christ. Their anguish will be regarded as His anguish; their danger as His danger. At the moment of Israel's forgiveness myriads of enemies will be surrounding them, seeking to devour them with open mouth—but Christ suddenly identifies Himself with them; and then, all the glorious power of Heaven is put forth to deliver them. On the same principle on which their sorrow is spoken of as His sorrow, their deliverance is spoken of as His deliverance. What can be a stronger proof that forgiven Israel is regarded as one with Christ?

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heritage of the hosts of nations? And I said, Thou shalt call Me, My Father; and shalt not turn away from Me."

Their being married unto the Lord is declared in Hosea and elsewhere. "*And I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord*" (Hosea ii. 19, 20). See also Isaiah liv. 5. "*Thy Maker is thy husband; the Lord of Hosts is His name.*"

The same text in Joel, to which Peter referred in connexion with the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Ghost, is to receive its great and final accomplishment when Israel are baptized with the same Spirit, after the Day of the Lord has come.

The very same words which the Prophet Isaiah applies to millennial Jerusalem, are by the Apostle Paul applied to the Heavenly Jerusalem: because, both being married to the Lord by the Sarah-covenant of grace, are virtually and essentially *one*—just as that part of the family of faith which are now in rest above, and that part which is yet militant below, are *one*. If there had been any essential or everlasting distinction between those in the millennial and those in the Heavenly City, this commutation of language would have been impossible. Compare Isaiah liv. 1, and Gal. iv. 27.

Some have said that millennial Israel cannot reign with Christ, because they do not suffer with Him. It is true, indeed, that they will not share in the *millennial* reign of Christ: but what text is there that makes the living in a dispensation of suffering, or the enduring any particular kind or amount of suffering, necessary to the sharing in that final and everlasting glory which

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in the fifth of the Romans is expressed by the words, "*reigning in life*"? The Apostles who wrote in and for a dispensation in which suffering for Christ is the appointed lot and also the distinctive mark of Christ's true people, often, when referring to the sufferings, refer also to the glory which is to follow those sufferings. But why? First, in the way of consolation, as when Paul says to Timothy, "*If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him*"—that is, though we suffer, yet let us not be dismayed: let us not merely think of the sufferings, but also of the glory that is to follow. Secondly, the Apostles speak of sufferings for Christ as a necessary badge of true saintship in this dispensation, when multitudes who profess His name refuse to take up their cross, and prefer to serve the world and sin. Thus when the Apostle says, "*If so be we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together*," no contrast is intended with the saints of another dispensation. The contrast is only with those who in this dispensation refuse to suffer the reproach of Truth.

But, although there is no text which makes any suffering except that of the great Substitute *necessary* to the final inheritance of glory (else how could infants who die in infancy be glorified?), and, although it is true that millennial Israel will not suffer as we now do, yet it must be remembered that millennial Israel also will know what it is to be hated for Christ's sake. Their first typical deliverance was when all the hosts of Egypt were seeking to swallow them up: their last deliverance will be when Satan, loosed for a little season, will have summoned all nations of the earth against them—"*the number of whom is as the sand of the sea*" (Rev. xx. 8). Israel will not indeed become their prey: but will not their hearts mourn at the sight

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of so great an evil? They will not, therefore, be unexercised about others' sin. And though sin will never be allowed to have dominion over their hearts and ways, yet it will still be in them. They will still have to say, "*In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing*"—they will still have to "*crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts.*" They will still be required to deny themselves. Their cup, therefore, is not unmingled, nor will be, until they shall be able experimentally to say, "*All former things have passed away.*"

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THE MILLENNIUM AND THE EVERLASTING STATE*

IN order rightly "to divide the Word of Truth," it is needful to maintain with the most unceasing care, the distinction appointed to subsist for ever between the "First" and the "Last Adam." On that distinction are founded all the dispensational arrangements of God, past, present, and to come, "*The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second Man is the Lord from Heaven.*" On this distinction is founded the difference between the millennial heavens and earth and the *New* Heavens and Earth subsequently created—a difference which many fail to recognize. If it be asked when the history of the Adamic earth and of man bearing the image of the first Adam terminates (a question of no little moment), the answer is: It terminates when the Millennium ends. Although, during the Millennium, all who shall rise in the first resurrection will bear the image of their risen Lord, and *in them* no traces of the likeness of the first Adam will remain; yet it will be otherwise with those who will inhabit the earth. They, during the Millennium, will be in unchanged bodies of flesh and blood—mortal—corruptible—having yet indwelling sin in them—still having to say, "*In me,*

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that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." But as soon as that great final hour shall come, when He who sitteth on the throne shall say, "*Behold, I make all things new,*" then all that bears the likeness of the first Adam disappears for ever. None will be admitted into the New Earth except those in whom both mortality and sin have ceased to be. Mortality will necessarily cease then, because death, "*the last enemy,*" will have been destroyed. The saints who have lived during the Millennium will then put on their garments of resurrection-glory, and join their brethren, " the Church of the first-born ones," who have preceded them. Those garments of glory can only be assumed by those who, in virtue of their union with Christ, as the new federal Head of His people, will have been changed into His heavenly likeness. This is taught as plainly as words can teach it, in 1 Cor. xv., and other passages. At the close of this present dispensation, many in Israel and many among the heathen will be spared and preserved through the day of the Lord's appearing, and so form the first inhabitants of the millennial earth. But it will be otherwise at the close of the Millennium. None in *unchanged* bodies can be transferred from the old into the new earth, for then mortality would *not* cease to be. Therefore there can be none transferred from the old earth into the new, except those who shall be changed so as to bear the likeness of the last Adam, being the children of the resurrection.

If, therefore, everything which bears the likeness of the first Adam is to be excluded from the New Earth, it is obvious that Israel, as marked by those earthly characteristics which will attach to them during the Millennium, will have no place in the New Earth. All millennial Israel will, through grace, be preserved (even as believers now are) from breaking the link which binds them to

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God, and *corporately* will be sustained in the midst of the nations of earth as the unfailing witnesses of holiness and truth. They will be the first Corporate Body in the earth, whose collective testimony will be indefectibly maintained. Yet *individually* they will be in nothing *perfect.* The traces of the fall, both morally and physically, will still be found in all they are and in all they do. Consequently not one of the descriptions which Scripture gives of the condition of Israel and other inhabitants of the millennial earth, can, in its entirety apply to the tenants of the New Earth, for they will be made spiritual, even as to their bodies, and will have done for ever with every arrangement which men as men know. They will have the same capacities for dwelling in the heaven of heavens, as in the New Earth which the Lord will give them as one, but not the only one, of the spheres of their glory. No such capacities will attach to millennial Israel.

Yet, although "Israel" as *an earthly people,* and "Israel" as *an earthly name,* will cease to exist when "*former things have passed away, and all things are made new,*" yet it does not hence follow that Israel and the name of Israel have no place in that new and higher order of things that will succeed. Words that have been previously used in earthly senses are capable of being used in new senses and higher and more blessed applications. The words "man," "body," "bride," and many other like expressions that will have been used to denote conditions of being on earth, will continue to be used in Heaven, but in applications altogether new. The great Head of Israel, He to whom it was said "*When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called My son out of Egypt,*" has already borne with Him the name of Israel into glory; for we find in Isaiah these words

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addressed to Christ, "*Thou art My servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified*," etc.; and then the passage goes on to speak of glories and blessings that are to pertain to Christ under this name of Israel. "*Israel*," therefore, is a name that Christ bears in resurrection. And as the name of Israel is thus, even at present, borne in heaven by the great Head of the redeemed, so we find the name of "*Jerusalem*," the city of Israel, applied to the city of the redeemed; and that when it takes its everlasting place as the centre of the New Earth. "*And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*" And when does the great Abrahamic seal of circumcision—the sign and seal of the covenant of grace—find its *full* accomplishment? Never, till the antitype of circumcision, as explained by the Apostle Paul in the Colossians, shall be fulfilled to *all* the redeemed; when, separated from all that is of the flesh, through union with Christ in death and resurrection, and bearing the likeness of their risen Lord, they shall, in the New Heavens and New Earth, manifest who and what the true circumcision are. And who are called by Paul in the Galatians, the "*Israel of God*"? Is it not used by the Apostle as a title extended to all who belong to the new creation—and walk after that rule? We are justified, therefore, in saying that the words "*Israel of God*" will not be apprehended in all the fulness and comprehensiveness of their meaning until all the redeemed, as alike the children of the new Jerusalem (*see* Gal. iv. 26), shall meet together in the New Earth. Great, therefore, as the promises to the earthly Israel during the Millennium are, yet the counsels of God in providing the final portion of the family of Abraham by faith—the true and everlasting Israel—were

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never limited to the Millennium. There is, consequently, an everlasting and heavenly sense in which we may use the names both of "*Jerusalem*" and of "*Israel.*" Whilst on the one hand we guard against overlooking the use of these names in that distinctive earthly sense in which they will be used in the earthly scene of the Millennium, we must also take heed that we do not reject them in that new and everlasting sense in which they will pertain to all the redeemed when all former things shall have passed away. Indeed, the blessings and glory of the earthly Israel and earthly Jerusalem in the Millennium are to be regarded as a pledge and indication of the better blessings that are to surround the Israel of God in the New Earth. We need not, therefore, be surprised if we find applied to the foreshadowing event, language intended to include the event foreshadowed. The very words which, in Isaiah, are used of the earthly Jerusalem in her millennial glory (*see* Is. liv. 1), are by the Apostle applied to the heavenly city (Gal. iv. 27); for, married by the same covenant to the same Lord, they are *virtually* one—they are different courts of the same glorious temple, and the glory of the heavenly part of "the Israel of God" will be but the pledge of that which all their brethren will finally inherit.

That peculiar form of sovereignty (βασιλεια), indeed, which Christ will hold during the Millennium, seeing that it is assumed for a definite end, *viz.*, the perfect subjugation of all enemies, will not continue after the last enemy has been subdued. The assumption of the millennial sovereignty is described in Daniel vii. 13, 14: its resignation is referred to in 1 Cor. xv. 28. But because the millennial form of power is laid aside, Christ will not cease to reign. He is Melchizedek—the

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eternal King, as well as the eternal Priest. He will reign *for ever.* So also the saints who rise in the first resurrection and Israel (though they will not retain that peculiar form of power which they will respectively exercise during the Millennium), yet will not cease to reign. "*The Church of the first-born ones*" (*των πρωτοτοκων*), joined by the saints of the Millennium who will be raised in the "*resurrection of life*" at the close of the Millennium, will together form one redeemed body—one glorified Church—who will together inherit the New Heavens and New Earth (though that will be only *one* of the spheres of their glory), and will reign for ever under their great Melchizedek. It is strictly true, therefore, that they who begin to reign at the commencement of the Millennium, will reign *for ever and ever*; though the sphere and the character of their sovereignty will be changed.*

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* In saying this, we do not mean to imply that there are no passages in which the words "*for ever*" are used in a limited sense. They are limited in many passages, as for example, when it is said to David, "*The sword shall never*" (Hebrew, shall not *for ever*) "*depart from thy house,*" 2 Sam. xii. 10. See also, Deut. xv. 17, "*He shall be thy servant for ever*"; said of the servant whose ear was bored with an awl. Numberless other passages, where "*for ever*" is similarly used, will be seen if the word עולם be referred to in a Hebrew concordance.

Whenever the circumstances spoken of are *avowedly and confessedly* temporary, the words "*for ever*" mean simply till the termination of the circumstances so recognized as temporary. Thus the Levitical economy having been avowedly temporary, any ceremonial ordinance connected with that economy when said to be ordained "*for ever,*" means till the end of that economy. In the same way in ordinary life, houses or lands in deeds of conveyance are said to be sold "*for ever.*" No one misunderstands such language. On the other hand, when the words "*for ever*"

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But it has been asked by some, over what can the redeemed reign in the new earth, if they are alone the occupants of it? Our answer is, they reign together with Christ over *all things*. "*The Church of the first-born ones*" (*των πρωτοτοκων*) will be complete when the

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are applied to persons or circumstances known to be without end (and this is the case whenever they are applied to the spiritual world), then they strictly mean "*for ever*." By saying, therefore, that the words "*for ever*" are sometimes used in a limited sense, no foundation is afforded to the heresy of those who deny the eternity of torment.

Texts which speak of the reign of Christ, or of the saints who rise in the first resurrection, or of Israel, being "*for ever*," may all be classified thus:—

1.—Those in which it is evident, from the context or otherwise, that the millennial condition is spoken of; and seeing that it is positively revealed that that condition is temporary, the words "*for ever*," when used of it, must be limited. See, for example, Isaiah lx. 21, "*They shall inherit* THE LAND *for ever*."

2.—Texts in which the millennial condition may be primarily spoken of; yet that condition being a pledge and forerunner of the everlasting glory of the Israel of God, language is used which includes a reference to that final glory which is strictly everlasting. See Isaiah lx. 19, "*The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light*."

3.—Texts which, without excluding the millennial reign, are primarily intended to direct our minds to the eternal reign. See Luke i. 33, "*And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end*."

4.—Texts in which millennial Jerusalem and Israel therein, are spoken of as *for ever* freed from subversion and the destructive power of enemies. This will be strictly true. When once forgiven, Jerusalem will never know sorrow or subversion by hostile power or by judgment any more. "*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord, from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. . . . It shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down, any more for ever*" (Jer. xxxi. 38, 40).

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Lord returns at the commencement of the Millennium; but *the Church* will not be complete till the last elect vessel of mercy shall be brought into glory; and that will not be until the end of the Millennium. And to this glorified body, Christ, in His character of "*Head over all things*," is given, just as Adam's portion was shared by Eve. Consequently the redeemed will reign over all things with Christ. The New Earth will be but one part of their inheritance. It is a seat of power rather than a sphere in which power is to be developed. And when we remember that the whole universe will be placed under Christ and the redeemed—that it is said of the saints that they are "*to judge*, (*i.e.*, exercise directive power over) *angels*"—that they are exalted even above the principalities, and powers, and dominions in heavenly places; and, if God should be pleased to put forth His creative power again in any sphere to us at present unknown, that such sphere would surely be submitted to the power of Him who is to have "*all things put under Him*"—when we remember this, it is not difficult to see that the saints have, indeed, a sphere of dominion infinite as well as everlasting.

It has further been asked by some, whether God may not create in and for the New Earth a new race of men; whether the paradisiacal condition of Adam, or something similar thereunto, may not be restored, so far as for men innocent and immortal to live and multiply in the New Earth, and so form the subjects of the glorified saints who would thus reign over them for ever.

Now, in the first place, even if there were nothing in Scripture that contradicted such a thought, we should require the plainest and most direct statement of Scripture before we could be justified in entertaining it. When the creation of the first heavens and earth is described,

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how prominent a place is given in the narrative to the creation of man. But when the creation of the New Heavens and Earth is described, the Scripture is entirely silent respecting any fresh creation *of man*. Is not this silence of itself sufficient to prove that there is no such fresh creation ?

But we have not to argue merely from the silence of Scripture. The Scripture declares that Christ is "*the* LAST ADAM." Now, if there were to be any progenitor of a new race of men, or if any form of manhood, other than that which pertains to Christ in resurrection, were to be created, Christ could not be called "*the* LAST *Adam*." That title is evidently designed to teach us that that form and condition of humanity which is seen in Christ glorified, is the one *last*, and *everlasting*, and *only* form of humanity in which man can exist for blessing. Nor could it, in strict truth, be said that all former things had "*passed away*," if even the paradisiacal form of the earthy Adam's humanity were again to appear. Moreover, as the first earth was created in suitability to the condition of the first Adam who was earthy, so will the New Earth be created in suitability to the condition of the Last Adam, who is heavenly. How, then, could such an earth be a suited abode for persons in flesh and blood, even though unfallen ? And will not the New Heavens and Earth form an integral part of that which is peculiarly the inheritance of the redeemed ? How, then, could those who are simply creatures, but *not* redeemed, have inheritance therein ? And does not the eighth Psalm, carefully considered, prove that, after the results of redemption are fully wrought out, "*man*," as a generic name, will cease to apply to any except those who are exalted into a sphere of super-angelic glory, such as is implied

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in the words "*crowned with glory and honour*"—words applied to Christ as the new Head of humanity; and that, consequently, "*to reign*" in the full power of risen life is a necessary characteristic of "*man*" when the dispensation of the fulness of times is reached, and that none can be included under that name to whom such exaltation does not pertain. Surely all and each of these considerations are sufficient to prove that "*man*" will never be re-created in a first-Adam form. No form of humanity will be found amongst the blessed except that which is in association and union with Christ glorified.

In conclusion, we would remark on the importance of remembering that the only part of the Revelation that describes the condition of the new earth, is the commencement of the twenty-first chapter, on to the end of the eighth verse. The subsequent verses of that chapter form a new division of the prophecy, and describe the condition of the New Jerusalem (not when *in* the *New* Earth), but during the Millennium, when it will be connected with, but not *in* the earth—the earth during the Millennium will *not* be new, but still Adamic. That the part of the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters, to which I refer, cannot apply to the new earth is sufficiently proved by one verse, "*the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*" Surely no one will assert that there can be any healing needed in an earth that is created in accordance with the glory of the Second Man—the Last Adam—an earth of which it is emphatically said that all "*the former things have passed away.*"*

* Nor do we read of "*nations*" in the New Earth. An expression that is found in our version in reference to the millennial

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And although we do not depart from the principle of interpreting the words of Scripture *literally* by saying, that the same word may sometimes be used in an earthly sense, and in other passages in a new and heavenly sense (such is the case with the words "*man*," "*body*," "*Israel*," "*circumcision*," "*Jerusalem*"); or by saying that the same expression may sometimes be limited by its context, etc., and sometimes used in the strictness of its signification (such is the case with "*for ever*"), yet we *should* depart from the literal principle of interpretation if we said that numbers used definitely (as in Rev. xx., "*they lived and reigned with Christ* A THOUSAND *years*") could be indefinitely extended. Moreover, we know that the *kind* of sovereignty which Christ assumes at the commencement of the Millennium, is to be laid aside as soon as the last enemy is destroyed (*see* 1 Cor. xv. 26); consequently it is impossible that that *kind* of sovereignty should be for ever; and yet it is strictly true, that He shall reign "*for ever, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end.*" The sovereignty of the Israel of God, and of their great Melchizedek, will not cease, but will be displayed more illustriously when the millennial form of sovereignty has passed away.

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earth, *viz.*, "*nations of them that are saved*," may have familiarized the mind with the thought that "*nations*" is a word that may be admitted into the eternal state. But it is not a scriptural thought. The words "*them that are saved*," is an interpolation; the right reading being, "*the nations shall walk by means of the light thereof.*" και περιπατησουσι τα εθνη δια του φωτος αυτης. See Rev. xxi. 24, Tregelles' Greek Text. This is said of the millennial nations.

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ON ISAIAH XVIII.

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS

ALL who understand what is written in the Scripture respecting the dark and awful future that yet awaits Israel and the nations of the Roman World before the present night of evil ends, must be deeply grieved at the efforts so frequently made to explain this chapter as if it were about to receive, in the present dispensation, its accomplishment. Are the Scriptures indeed written so ambiguously that it is impossible to distinguish between passages that describe Christ's reign of righteousness and peace, and other passages which describe this present hour of unsubjected and increasing evil? Can a period when Satan is "the god of this world" and "the deceiver" of the nations, be the same as a period when he is bound, and "shall deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years shall be fulfilled"? Can a period which is to end by a summons to the nations "to prepare war"—to "beat their plowshares into swords and their pruning-hooks into spears" . . . . and "to come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat" to be judged (*See* Joel iii. 9, etc.), be the same as a period when "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks:" when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more"? (Isaiah ii. 4). Can a

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period during which the Lord Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father, waiting till His enemies shall have been set as a footstool for His feet (*See* Ps. cx.), be the same as a period when, after having been brought before the Ancient of days (Dan. vii.), He shall come forth as " King of kings and Lord of lords " that " all peoples, nations, and languages might serve Him " ? (Dan. vii. 14.) If we cannot recognize contrasts like these, what is there that we can recognize ? The chapter before us describes Israel as forgiven. How then can it belong to a dispensation, throughout the whole course of which, Israel is *not* forgiven ? It describes a Gentile nation as summoned to the honoured office of aiding in the regathering of Israel. But from the days of Nimrod until now, there never has been a Gentile nation (and in the present dispensation there never will be) that has been employed *as a nation*, as the servant of God in holiness and Truth. As yet, Israel is the only *nation* which has been tried in such a relation ; and they have utterly failed. Of the Gentiles it is said " Thou never barest rule over them : they were not called by Thy name." Whatever the Harlot and the Beast in the Revelation may mean, none who receive the testimony of that Book can question that they—first, the Harlot, and then the Beast—constitute the attractive centre of the nations during the closing hours of the present dispensation. How can nations, whilst tending to such a centre, be the servants of God for blessing ?

It is true, indeed, that a time is coming, and may, possibly, be near, when Israel will return, *unbelieving and unforgiven*, to their Land : and it is true also that Gentile nations will assist them in *that* return. But alas, how different will such a return be from their final regathering under the hand of the Lord their God for

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good. There is no past period of the world's history, nor any past period of Israel's history, so dark with the blackness of evil, as that fearful period which will commence by their (now possibly near) return in unbelief to their own land. The following words in Ezekiel xxii. 18 yet await their fulfilment: "Son of man, the house of Israel is to Me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore *I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.* As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in Mine anger and in My fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of My wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out My fury upon you." How different these words of woe and judgment, from the words of peace and blessing in the chapter before us! What contrast can be more vivid?

Almost from the moment the Apostles died, professing Christianity has sought to sanctify its own position in the earth, or else the position of the nations with whom it has chosen to associate itself, by the perverted use of many a holy and blessed passage which belongs to another and future age, when the hour of the Truth's triumph shall have come. Thus, that bright and holy vision of a woman clothed with the Sun, etc. (Rev. xii.), has been said (and it is still repeated by many a living writer) to represent God's estimate of the practical condition of professing Christianity as exhibited in the days

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of Constantine; and the still more heavenly vision of those standing on the sea of crystal having the harps of God (Rev. xv.) is said to represent the present condition of Protestant England. If Ecclesiastical corruption (for what subsequent corruption was not found germinant, and more than germinant, in the days of Constantine ?) —and if human progress, that is, the progress of unregenerate man, are holy and blessed in the sight of God, then, these interpretations may stand. But let us remember that it is very easy to pervert the light of Scripture so as to deepen darkness. If the light that should guide us become darkness, how great must be that darkness !

When " human progress " as it is called, shall have reached that climax of evil which shall cause " the Ancient of days " to sit in judgment on the great words and blasphemies of the last human Head of evil—and when the Son of Man shall have been brought before the Ancient of days and be invested with that power over earth before which every nation, and tongue, and people shall finally bow (*See* Dan. vii.)—and when it shall be said, first in Heaven, and afterward on earth, " The sovereignty of the world (ἡ βασιλεια του κοσμου) hath become the sovereignty of our Lord and of His Christ " (Rev. xi.)—and when that ten-horned Beast " dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly," that denotes the kingdoms of the Roman World, shall have been judged and given to the burning flame, then, and not before, the time shall come for the eighteenth of Isaiah to be fulfilled. It is a chapter whose fulfilment belongs not to " the day of man," but to " the Day of the Lord." It belongs not to the night of evil, but to the dawn of " the morning without clouds."

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NOTES ON ISAIAH XVIII.

THIS Chapter has for its subject the regathering of forgiven Israel to their own Land, when the day of their evil and of their sorrow shall have passed for ever; and when, standing under the grace of the New Covenant, they shall form, not as individuals merely, but as a nation, the centre of the earth's government in the power of Truth. For this purpose they are to be regathered at the commencement of the millennial day, and in this chapter we find one of the spared Gentile nations summoned in order to aid in the regathering. As the last manifested act of rebellion, in this dispensation, is to be a confederation of certain nations against Israel, saying, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance" (*See* Ps. lxxxiii. 4) —so, the first act by which any of the spared nations will prove their allegiance to the God of Israel, will be by aiding in the regathering of His people.

We must not, however, expect to find in prophecies which belong, as this does, to the next dispensation, the same definiteness and specification that is found in prophecies that pertain to the present dispensation. To know where and under what circumstances transgression is "to come to the full"—and to be taught respecting the course, and place, and final form of development of the last great Apostasy, must be necessary for the present practical guidance of our steps:

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but there is not the same necessity for our being taught, *circumstantially*, concerning a dispensation to which we do not ourselves belong. To know that there will be a nation that shall, in the morning of the future day of the earth's blessing, be summoned to the honoured office of regathering Israel is important, for it throws a bright and cheering ray upon the earth's future, beyond the darkness of the present night of sorrow. But to know where and what that nation will be is *not* important: for such knowledge could afford no element of present moral guidance. The Land, therefore, to which this work of blessing is assigned, is not designated by name, but is described only in general terms—too general for any to be able to say what Land it is, until the hour of its action shall arrive.

"*Ho, Land shadowing with wings.*"]* The first word

* Literally, 'shadow of wings'—σκια πτερυγων. *Aquila.* There seems no reasonable ground of doubt that צלצל is kindred to צל, *a shade, a defence*, being a reduplicate and intensive form. If the other sense of 'sound' or 'clashing'—*strepitus alarum*, adopted by Gesenius and others, be taken, the general sense of the passage is the same. In the one case attention is directed to the *kindliness* of the power: in the other, to the rapidity and energy with which it is exercised—the object in either case being Israel.

Horsley observes—"The second principal sense of the root צל is to shade, to overshade, to shelter, and, as a noun, 'shade,' 'a shadow,' 'a shelter'; and this is the sense in which it is most frequently used. . . . It is certainly an objection of no great weight against these renderings, that the word צלצל in its reduplicate form, is not to be found in any other text in the sense of 'shade' or 'overshadowing.' According to the principles of the Hebrew language, the reduplication of the letters of a root only gives intensity to the sense, whatever it may be. So that in whatsoever sense a word in the simple form is used, in the same it may be used in the reduplicate form, if the occasion requires an intension of the signification—כנפים צלצל, *late obumbrans alis.*" *Horsley.*

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הוי, should not be translated "Woe," but "Ho!"—a word of summons. It is the same word that is used in Isaiah lv. 1—"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters": and in Zech. ii. 6. "Ho, ho, come forth and flee from the land of the north, saith the Lord."

This translation of הוי is given both by Lowth and Horsley in this passage. A similar correction should be made in Is. x. 5, where Antichrist is summoned to the work of trampling down Israel for the last time. "Ho, to the Assyrian," or "Ho, to Asshur."

The Land thus summoned is described as a Land "shadowing with wings"—the emblem of cherishing and protective power; a power which, perhaps, previous to the time here spoken of, may have been directed towards the fugitives of Israel during their last great persecution under Antichrist. But however this may be, it is here definitely commissioned to put forth its kindly power in aiding Israel, whilst they yet bear marks of being a people that have been long trampled down and trodden under foot.

The Land thus addressed is further described as being "beyond"† or external to the rivers of Cush. There

† For the meaning of מעבר followed by ל, in the sense of "*beyond*," see the strictly parallel use in Deut. xxx. 13—"*beyond* the sea": and especially Zeph. iii. 10, which I should translate thus: "From beyond the rivers of Cush, my suppliants, the daughter of my dispersed, they (the nations) shall bring—my offering": that is, the nations shall bring forgiven Israel as an offering or present to Jehovah. E regionibus quæ trans flumina sunt Chusææ, supplices meos, dispersorum filiam, velut munus mihi, adducent Gentes. In the "*Critici Sacri*" there is the following note of *Drusius*. "Adductus auctoritate Chaldæi Paraphrastæ libenter pro '*supplices mei filia*,' legerim '*supplices meos, filiam*'; ut significet munus quod Deo adducetur, fore ipsos Judæos dispersos per loca quæ sunt trans flumina Æthiopiæ.

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was an African Cush (Æthiopia) bordering on the Nile, south of Egypt, and also an Asiatic Cush, referred to in Genesis ii. 13, in connexion with the rivers that issued from Eden. "And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is that that compasseth the whole land of Cush." The African Cush, or Æthiopia, is referred to in many places, such as Daniel xi. 43, 2 Kings xix. 9, and elsewhere. The Asiatic Cush is situate near the head of the Persian Gulf, and is therefore related to the Euphrates, just as the African Cush is to the Nile. Accordingly, the Nile and the Euphrates—the one the pride of Egypt, the other of Assyria, are here referred to as the rivers of Cush. They are again mentioned in a subsequent part of this chapter, and are there expressly made to symbolize the power by which the Land of God's people has been, from generation to generation, "spoiled." "Whose Land the Rivers have spoiled."

It is very evident from this verse that the Nile and the Euphrates are not, in this chapter, used to denote *merely* geographical limits, but that they also denote that specific power with which, during "the Times of the Gentiles" (that is, from Nebuchadnezzar until Antichrist), God has invested certain Gentile nations in order that they might trample down Jerusalem. No country therefore can be regarded as "*external* to the rivers of Cush," that has, in any degree, inherited or shared the power which those rivers symbolize. All the four great empires—Chaldæa, Persia, Greece and Rome,

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. . . Ut ut sit, Jonathæ verba clara et perspicua sunt. *E transfluvialibus partibus Indiæ per miserationes revertentur exsules populi mei, qui deportati fuerant, eosque adducent velut munera.*"

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have successively possessed the power denoted by these Rivers; and in virtue thereof have held the Land of Israel in subjection. Nor is the period of that subjection over: "the Times of the Gentiles" are not yet ended. The last relation of the Roman nations to Israel and the Land of Israel, we have yet to see. Antichrist, or, as he is called in Isaiah, "the Assyrian," will, as the Head of the whole Roman world (*παση της οικουμενης*), which will then be divided into Ten Kingdoms *federally* united, direct, for the last time, the destructive power denoted by these Rivers against Israel, and "will trample them down as the mire in the streets" (Isaiah x. 6).

No country, therefore, that falls within the limits of the Roman World, (*ἡ οικουμενη*—Orbis Terrarum, as the Romans proudly were wont to call it) can be considered as external to these Rivers of Cush, regarded as the symbolic representatives of Gentile power. Nor will any of the Roman Kingdoms over which Antichrist is to rule, be able to exercise kindly or fostering care towards Israel in the day of Israel's forgiveness: for on them will fall the heavy weight of Divine judgment in a manner more terrible than man has ever yet beheld. The pride of their strength and glory will be gathered to Armageddon (*See* Rev. xvi.)—the valley of Jehoshaphat will be the place where they will confront the manifested power of the Jehovah of Israel (*See* Joel iii. 2, Zech. xiv. 4, Rev. xix. 19). Thus the flower of their strength will perish. But not only so—the symbol used in Daniel to denote the Roman Kingdoms at that time, is a Ten-horned Beast under the dominance of a little horn: and it is said of that Beast that "*its body*" is to be given to the burning flame. No expression can

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more distinctly denote the completeness of exterminating judgment that is to fall on the whole "corpus" of the Roman Nations.

The Land therefore which is to be called on to aid Israel in the day of their blessing must be a land far removed from these doomed kingdoms which have aforetime found, and will again find, in "the rivers of Cush," elements of mighty and wondrous power—but a power which they have so used, and will again so use, against God, as to bring themselves at last into direct collision with the power of Heaven. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful." The end of the nineteenth of the Revelation describes their destruction. The voice of the Lord will not summon any of *these* nations to the work of blessing described in this chapter.

Our own country therefore, as having formed of old one of the chief Provinces of the Empire of Imperial Rome—and as having had and exercised its share of that peculiar "iron-like" power wherewith God has endowed the countries of the Roman World—and as having yet, in time still future, to take its place among those Ten federally united kingdoms that are to form the last subdivision of the Roman World, must, on all these accounts share the responsibility and the doom of that Beast whose "body" is to be given to "the burning flame." It cannot, therefore, be the country here summoned to show favour to Israel in the day of their blessing.*

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* The Roman Empire has its first recognized existence in Scripture when Cæsar Augustus sent out his decree for its being

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The Land addressed is further described as having power to traverse the sea, and is commissioned to put forth that power, not for war and destruction—not for purposes of selfish aggrandisement (the reign of Babylon's covetousness will have terminated then)—but in sending swift messengers to befriend scattered and peeled Israel. " Ho, Land shadowing with wings, which art beyond the rivers of Cush, that sendest by sea ambassadors, even in vessels of reed over the face of the waters, [saying,] Go ye swift messengers to a nation dragged captive and peeled, to a nation terrible from this day and onward, a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose Land the Rivers have spoiled."

The vessels are described as vessels of reed (papyrus) —it is the same word as is used of the ark of reeds in which Moses was laid. " Vessels of reed " stand as the emblem of vessels light, and consequently swift, but

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taxed. It was used of God to punish and " tread down " Jerusalem, until Hadrian gave to that city his terrific and crushing blow. Never before was Jerusalem so stricken. " What of the city of Jerusalem had formerly risen from its ashes, was again levelled with the ground. In its room, a heathen city, laid out after Grecian models and provided with market-places, theatres and heathen fanes was to be reared. Every possible outrage on Jewish feeling was devised. A statue of Hadrian was placed where the Altar of Jehovah had once stood, and in room of the Temple, a fane for the Roman Jupiter was built. Over the Bethlehem gate the figure of a pig's head was wrought in relief. Even the Samaritans who had sided against Israel did not escape unmolested. When their aid was no longer required, as frequently happens in analogous circumstances, their claims were also set aside, and they had to witness the erection of a temple of Jupiter on their holy Mount Gerizim. The very *name* of Jerusalem was to be forgotten. The new city built on its site was called ' Ælia Capitolina.' Coins of the reign of Hadrian and of later Emperors bear that name, and on the reverse the names of the various heathen deities which, under one or other

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frail—frail as the barks with which Egypt was wont to navigate the Nile. "It is well known," says Bishop Lowth, "that the Egyptians commonly used on the Nile a light sort of ships, or boats, made of the reed, *papyrus*. Ex ipso quidem *papyro* navigia texunt. Plin. xiii. 2." Storms and tempests will not, as now, destroy, when the God of Israel shall reign; and they who, under His commission, go down into the great deep, however frail their barks, will speed as safely over the ocean as if they were gliding down the smooth current of the Nile. Men will not then trust in the iron strength of the workmanship of their own hands, but will seek their shelter under the name of the God of Israel—who will be their shelter—their shade upon their right hand. "The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve

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of the Emperors, were principally worshipped at Jerusalem. Soon afterwards the revulsion was so complete, that when on a certain occasion, a Christian convert, in his examination before a pro-consul, referred to Jerusalem, the latter did not know 'Ælia Capitolina' by that name. To complete the change and to make it for ever impossible to restore Jerusalem to its former position, all Jews were, on pain of death, forbidden to approach the City, even within such distance as to catch a glimpse of it." —*Edersheim's Hist. of the Jewish Nation after the Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.* Page 231 first ed., 212 second edition.

Such things as these supply a comment on the words, "whose land the rivers have spoiled." Had Rome not grasped the power denoted by the Nile and the Euphrates, she would not have been able to effect these things. As soon as Hadrian had thus crushed Jerusalem, the Roman Empire began to wane. Every country that was registered as a Province of Rome between the reigns of Augustus Cæsar and Hadrian, must be regarded as an integral part of the Roman Empire. "Britannia" was so registered.

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thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore." The God of Israel shall then be called "the God of the whole earth"—and marked outward protection shall be granted by Him to all His servants among all nations.

The swift messengers are sent to Israel as to a nation "scattered and peeled." The word translated "scattered" (ממשך from משך) means rather *drawn* or *dragged*, as by the hand of violence. Thus in Ps. x. 9, the wicked is compared to a lion that doth catch the poor, when *he draweth* him into his net. So also when the destruction of Egypt is spoken of, it is said, "Draw her and all her multitudes" (Ez. xxxii. 20). See also Job xli. 1, "Canst thou *draw* or *drag* Leviathan?" Israel will have been dragged into their last captivity by Antichrist, just immediately before the words of this chapter shall be fulfilled.

The word translated "peeled" (מורט) is from מרט, which means properly to polish or sharpen by continued rubbing or grinding. Hence the signification to "rub bare." In this sense it is applied to a shoulder that is rubbed bare of its flesh, or to a head that is rubbed bare of its hair. See Ez. xxix. 18, where it is translated "peeled." "Every shoulder was peeled": and Is. l. 6, "My back I gave to them that smote, and my cheeks to them that peeled," or laid bare. It is a word, therefore, that strongly denotes the being stripped and laid bare by the hand of cruelty and violence.

But the hand of oppressive violence is not always to prevail against Israel. From the time when this chapter shall begin to be fulfilled and onward* they are to be

* Such is evidently the right translation, and *not* "terrible from the beginning hitherto." Compare 1 Sam. xviii. 9, "from that day and onward." מהיום ההוא והלאה See also, Lev. xxii. 27, "From the eighth day, and thenceforth."

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" terrible," (נורא), the same word that is used of God as connecting Himself with Israel in that day, " O God, Thou art *terrible* out of Thy holy places: the God of Israel is He that giveth strength and power unto His people " (Ps. lxviii. 35). " The remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many peoples as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off " (Micah v. 8, 9).

Thus they shall be terrible from that day *and forward* towards their adversaries and the Lord's adversaries; but, to others " the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men " (Micah v. 7).

" *A nation meted out.*"] Literally, " a nation of line, line," that is, a nation that has again and again been subjected to the measuring line of its enemies. It is expressly said of Antichrist in his relation to Israel that he " shall divide the Land for gain " (*See* Dan. xi. 39).

" *And of down-treading.*"] Such is the literal rendering, " a nation of line, line, and of down-treading," מבוסה from בוס, to trample under foot. *καταπατεω, πατεω.* See Jer. xii. 10, where it is said of the false pastors, "they have *trodden under foot* My portion": and Is. lxiii. 18, " Our adversaries *have trodden down* Thy sanctuary." Compare the words of our Lord in Luke xxi., " Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Antichrist, it is said, " shall tread them down like the mire of the

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streets." Well therefore may Israel be called "a people of line, line," and "of treading down."

"*Whose land the rivers have spoiled.*"] The Gentile nations of whom Daniel prophesies as the spoilers and treaders-down of Israel, have always, when oppressing Israel, been masters of the power denoted by these rivers—the Nile and the Euphrates. The word בּוּז, translated in our version, "spoil," and in the margin, "despise," is a word that occurs only in this place. It matters little whether we regard it as cognate with בּוּז, *to despise*, or בּזז, *to spoil*. If "despise" be taken as the meaning, it refers to the scorn and contempt with which the proud Gentiles have regarded, and, in the days of Antichrist, will yet again regard, the land of God's forsaken people.

"*All ye inhabitants of the world and dwellers in earth, what time He lifteth up a standard on the mountains, ye shall see; and what time He bloweth a trumpet, ye shall hear.*"]: that is, however much ye may forget and despise Me during the time that I withdraw myself into My place, and am still (*see* Psalm lxxviii. 65); yet an hour is coming when ye shall be constrained to behold My ensign, and to hear My trumpet, when I shall "awake unto judgment and to help all the meek upon earth." There are other passages in which "the ensign" and "the trumpet" are mentioned. See, for example, Is. xxxi. 8, 9, "Then shall Asshur (Antichrist) fall; . . . and he shall pass over to his stronghold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of THE ENSIGN, saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and His furnace in Jerusalem." See Zechariah ix., "And the Lord shall be seen over them (forgiven Israel); and His arrow shall go forth as the lightning, and the Lord God shall

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blow THE TRUMPET, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south."*

"*For thus Jehovah said unto me, I will be still, and will consider in my place, like clear heat upon light, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.*"]. That is, I will retire and be still, like to the stillness of a day in which the air sleeps, when light and heat are found united in all the intensity of their power. "This verse," says Bishop Horsley, "seems to describe a long suspension of the visible interpositions of Providence in the affairs of the world and in favour of His people, under the image of that stillness and stagnation of the atmosphere which takes place in the extreme heats of the latter end of summer."

There are several passages where this retirement of Jehovah and the suspension of His *manifested* interference is spoken of. See Hosea v. 15, "I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offence and seek My face. In their affliction they will seek Me early." See also Ps. lxxviii. 65, "Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep," etc.

There is not the slightest reason for rendering אור in this passage otherwise than "*light.*" Even if it were the plural אורות, which it is not, there would be no

* Passages in which "the ensign" or "the trumpet" are mentioned, may be thus divided :—

I. Those which speak of destructive judgment against the enemies of Israel. Such are the passages just quoted.

II. Those which speak of judgment directed against Israel itself, as Is. v. 26.

III. Those which speak of the assembling of the spared nations in peace to effectuate His purposes towards Israel, as in Is. xi. 12, "And He shall set up an ensign for the nations," etc.

IV. Those which speak of Israel being gathered in peace, as in Is. xxvii. 13.

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justification for translating it "*herbs*," except one passage in 2 Kings iv. 39, where too the translation may be questioned, for אורות may be the specific name of some peculiar herb or plant, and not "herbs" in general. If it were the word to express "herbs" generally, it is strange that we do not find it elsewhere used. In Is. xxvi. 19, I should certainly render it thus—"Thy dew is as the dew of light"—ros matutinus, ["lights" in the plural, being a Hebraism, indicating fulness and completeness of light, as when the bright morning sun has arisen]. The dew when it falls silently and secretly at the evening hour, indicates the approach, not of the activities of day, but of the repose of night; whereas when it is found resting on the earth when the sun ariseth in its strength, it is not only seen covering the earth with a mantle of brightness as it reflects the morning ray, but ushers in the day of activity and life. There is a difference, therefore, between the dew of darkness and the dew of light. The morning of Israel's new and millennial day will have come when these words in Isaiah xxvi. 19 are fulfilled.

In the passage which we are considering (chap. xviii. 4), the thought is intensity of light accompanied by intensity of heat (heat coming upon light) as in a clear, still, summer day. Some think that this exceeding serenity and calm is here referred to as premonitory of the tempest that is to follow. Doubtless, a tempest *will* follow, but it does not seem to be referred to in the language here.

"*For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower*"] That is, just when the nations, under Antichrist, shall be expecting to reach the result of all their efforts; just when the

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flower has given place to the yet unripened grape, the mighty hand of the God of Israel shall be put forth against the vine of human hopes, and " the vine of the earth " shall be cut down, and the branches thereof be left to perish in rottenness and dishonour. Man, therefore, will never reap the harvest of his toil. God will lay it waste ; and they who have laboured therein will reap the whirlwind.

Then such of the nations as shall be spared (the nation addressed in this chapter more especially) shall bring their present to the Lord of Hosts—Israel being that present.

The whole passage may be rendered thus :—

Ho, Land shadowing with wings,
Which (art) beyond the rivers of Cush :
That sendest by sea ambassadors,
Even in vessels of reed,
Over the face of the waters, [saying,]
Go, ye swift messengers
To a nation dragged captive and peeled,
To a nation terrible from this day and onward ;
A nation meted out and trodden under foot,*
Whose Land the Rivers have spoiled ! [or despised.]

All ye inhabitants of the world and dwellers on earth,
What time He lifteth up an ensign on the mountains
Ye shall see,
And what time He soundeth a trumpet
Ye shall hear.

* Literally, a nation of line, line, and of down-treading.

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For thus hath Jehovah said unto me,
I will be still and consider in my place
Like clear heat upon light,
Like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.

For afore the harvest, when the bud is finished,
And the unripe grape is following on (literally, recompenseth) the flower,
He shall both cut off the sprigs with hooks,
And the branches, He shall remove and sever.
They shall be left together unto the fowl of the mountains,
And to the beasts of the earth :
And there shall summer upon them, the fowl,
And all the beasts of the earth upon them shall winter.

At that time shall be brought
A present to Jehovah of Hosts,
Of a people dragged captive and peeled,
And from a people terrible from this day and onward ;
A nation meted out and trodden under foot,
Whose Land the Rivers have spoiled,
To the place of the name of Jehovah of Hosts,
MOUNT ZION.

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ON THE FIRST PSALM

THE first verse of this Psalm describes the blessedness or happiness of THE Man that *hath not* walked in the counsel of the wicked, and *hath not* stood in the way of sinners, and *hath not* sat in the seat of scorners. This verse can be strictly true of ONE only. Of none except the Lord Jesus can it be said, that he NEVER had fellowship or connexion with any of the manifold forms of evil.

It is true, indeed, that Christ's people are, through grace, enabled in their measure to follow Him "who hath given us an example that we should follow His steps:" but their blessedness rests not on the ground of their NEVER having walked in ways of evil. Their *characteristic* blessing is rather found in such a Psalm as the xxxii. "Happy is he whose iniquity is forgiven and whose sin is covered, etc."—words which stand in marked contrast with the first verse of this Psalm. Nor is it likely that the first Psalm, which is commonly regarded as the preface to the whole book, should be silent respecting Him whose perfectness, and sufferings, and resulting glory, are the great theme of this "Book of Praises."*

"I have been induced," says Fry, "to embrace the opinion of some among the ancient interpreters, who conceive that the first Psalm is intended to be descriptive of the character and reward of the JUST ONE,

* The title of this book in the Hebrew is, "*the Book of Praises.*"

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whose merits, sufferings, and conflicts, will be found unquestionably to be the subjects of many of these sacred songs. God forbid that I should be understood to say that the believer in Christ is not bound to show his faith by his works; or that no particular promises of blessedness encourage his diligence in his vocation, and in his keeping of the commandments of God! This would be contrary to numberless passages of Scripture. What I mean to assert is, that the passage before us is not parallel to these Scriptures, but is to be classed with those that describe the righteousness of the Law. 'Blessed is the man that continueth in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.' In this point of view it will, I trust, be admitted, that though Christ must be imitated in His righteous and holy life, and that this imitation is the proof of their discipleship who call Him Lord; yet all the righteousness that can meet the demand of the Law, and all the holiness that can bear the light of the Divine countenance, must be sought for in the blessed Surety alone and can become ours only by gracious imputation." (*Fry on the Psalms*).*

It must be remembered too that the Psalms have for their peculiar subject things *manifested in the earth.* They are the utterances either of Christ Himself, or else of those in whom His Spirit dwelleth, respecting certain manifestations of evil, and certain manifestations of good, of which the earth, and especially Jerusalem and the Land of Israel, are the sphere. Sometimes *evil* is the subject,—its hostility to God, God's people, and

* See also Dr Hawker. "This Psalm, which may be considered as introductory to the whole book, very sweetly opens with a view of Christ's Person, and calls Him 'blessed.' Some features are described which can be spoken of none but Him."

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God's Truth; its heading up in THE ANTICHRIST; its temporary triumph, and final overthrow; at other times, *Righteousness* is the subject—its perfect development in CHRIST; its temporary suffering, and its final triumph: but in either case, the earth, and especially Israel, is the sphere in which all these things are to be displayed—all resulting in glory to God and blessing to His people, and therefore fit subjects for this "Book of Praises."

The earth has already witnessed the sufferings and sorrows of the Lord Jesus, but it hath not yet witnessed His glory. Indeed, in a certain sense, it is still the witness of His sorrows; for His people suffer and in all their afflictions He is afflicted. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?" We read of the Lord Jesus, that when personally on earth, "His visage was more marred than any man, and His form more than the sons of men;" that "He was as a root out of a dry ground, having no form nor comeliness." It was the day of His humiliation and suffering, as the Surety for His people's sins. He was not then seen "as the tree planted by the rivers of waters"; on the contrary, suffering, not prosperity, was His portion. But when He shall be manifested again, how changed the circumstances! He will be seen, not "as a root out of a dry ground," but as the Branch of the Lord beautiful and glorious. "In that day shall the Branch of Jehovah be beautiful and glorious" (Is. iv. 2). "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days, Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby He shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer. xxiii. 6). Then shall this

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Psalm be seen to be fulfilled in the manifested blessings that shall rest upon Christ, His people and His Truth. All shall recognize Him to be "as a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth, shall prosper." He will never again have to say, "I have laboured in vain, I have spent My strength for nought, and in vain. Yet surely My labour is with the Lord, and My work with My God" (Is. xlix. 4). The committal of His cause and of His labour unto His God, which hath been already answered by His exaltation into the heavens, will then be further answered by results manifested in the earth.

Some have so interpreted this Psalm as to corroborate the statements of those who teach that it is right for believers to seek after and to expect worldly prosperity. They wish, as respects wealth, honours, and the like, to be as trees planted by the water-courses: and some have even ventured to say, that the being prospered in earthly things should in the case of believers, be taken as a sure token of Divine approval. The Apostle however thought otherwise when he counted it all joy to be esteemed "as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things" for Christ's sake. He knew that now is the time when, not the righteous, but the wicked are "in great power and flourish as the green bay tree." "There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, . . . folly is set in great dignity, and the rich (the rich in heavenly wisdom) sit in low place. I have seen servants riding upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth" (Eccles. x. 5-7).

And thus shall it continue to be, until the hour of the manifested glory of the Righteous One shall be the hour also of the manifested doom of the wicked. When

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Christ was as "a root out of a dry ground"—"as a worm and no man, a reproach of men and despised of the people"—*they* were as cedars of Lebanon, as bulls of Bashan, their eyes standing out with fatness: *they* had more than heart could wish. But when the time shall come for Christ to receive the blessings of this Psalm, and *to be known* as "a tree planted by the courses of waters," *they* shall perish. "The wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. They shall be like the chaff which the wind scattereth." The mighty image of Gentile glory shall be broken in pieces then. "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors: and the wind carried them away that no place was found for them. Then the stone that smote the image (that is, Christ in the strength of His Messiah-kingdom) became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" (Dan. ii. 35).

Such is the result expected by the family of faith whilst they wait during the time of the Truth's suffering and reproach. Although they cannot *in the title of their own names*, claim the blessing of the first verse of this Psalm, yet, as accepted in the Beloved, they know that they are to be fellow-partakers of His glory, even joint-heirs with Him. Accordingly, He has called them into the path of suffering obedience here; to suffer *for* and *with* the Truth. They have to remember that "Jehovah knoweth (that is, observes, understands and appreciates) the way of the righteous," even though He may for the present, refrain Himself and not act upon that knowledge. Yet the hour is drawing nigh when He will prove Himself to be a God of judgment by whom actions are weighed.

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The subject, therefore, of this Psalm may be said to be the perfectness of the character of Christ and its contrast with the wickedness of the wicked; as also the future manifested recognition of the excellency of Christ as contrasted with the manifested destruction of the wicked. The first Psalm may therefore be regarded as a preface to the whole book. It leads on our minds to the great final scene—"the morning without clouds" that is to arise upon the earth after all those scenes of sorrow of which other of the Psalms treat, have passed away for ever. It is usual in Scripture to speak *first*, of that which is in fulfilment *last*. We are taught respecting the morning of joy, before we learn respecting the night of sorrow.

The Psalm may be rendered thus:—

O the blessedness of the man
Who hath not walked in the counsel of the wicked,
And in the way of sinners hath not stood,
And in the seat of scorners hath not sat;
For* (seeing that the law of Jehovah is his delight,
And that in his law he continually meditateth, day and night)
He shall therefore be like a tree planted on courses of waters
That rendereth its fruit in its season;
Its leaf also shall not wither;
And all that he doeth shall prosper.
Not so the wicked;
For they shall be like, verily, unto chaff
Which the wind scattereth.
Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment
Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous;
But the way of the wicked shall perish.

* See note in succeeding paper.

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NOTES ON PSALM I.

VERSE 1

אשרי, properly, *blessedness*, in the sense of *happiness* or *prosperity*. It might be translated literally, "*O the happinesses of;*" the plural, as is common in Hebrew, denoting fulness or completeness. Thus שלומים, *peaces*, *i.e.* fulness of peace. אשר, from the verb אשר, *to go straight;* hence, *to prosper*, implies the happiness resulting from prosperity bestowed by God. Compare Deut. xxxiii. 29. "*Happy* art thou O Israel." The word that signifies "*bless*" is ברך. When Jehovah blesses (ברך), then this fulness of prospering happiness (אשרים) results.

The man who hath not walked]. These words are evidently intended to individuate the person spoken of. The past tense as here used indicates a past historic fact. Compare the words addressed to Joshua:—

This book of *the law* shall not depart out of thy mouth,
But *thou shalt meditate therein day and night*
That thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein,
For then thou *shalt make thy way prosperous*
And then thou shalt have good success. (Josh. i. 9).

Joshua did *not* do this *perfectly*—nor Moses—nor David—nor any one among the saints of God. But this Psalm points to some one as having done it; and who is that some one? It was the antitypical Joshua —the person who was really to plant the Israel of God

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in the everlasting land of their inheritance—Him of whom it is said, "Thou lovedst righteousness and hated wickedness, therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows."

רשעים, *the wicked* (οἱ ανομοι), a strong expression, denoting a rebelliousness of evil that is ready to spurn every bond and to break every yoke. It is derived from רשע to make a noise or tumult, applied to evil in respect of its rebellious restlessness, which, like a rising flood, spurns resistance, bursts every barrier, and spreads woe and desolation along its course. This rebelliousness of evil is especially to characterize *Antichrist*, whence he is called in Is. xi. רשע, *the wicked one.* ("With the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked one.") In 2 Thess. ii. where this passage from Isaiah is quoted, it is rendered by the Apostle, not as in the Septuagint, τον ασεβη, but τον ανομον, "the lawless one."

The application of these words (רשע and ανομος) to the characteristic lawlessness of the latter days, seems to have led some to regard "sin" ἁμαρτια (חטא) as denoting a less, and more excusable, form of evil than רשע, ανομια. This causes the Apostle John to say, "sin (חטא) is *lawlessness*" (ανομια); *i.e.* all sin has in it the principle of rebellious insubordination, and is therefore, virtually, lawlessness. Πας ὁ ποιων την ἁμαρτιαν και την ανομιαν ποιει, και ἡ ἁμαρτια εστιν ἡ ανομια. 1 John iii. 4. "Every one that is a doer of sin is a doer also of lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness." [Ανομια should not be rendered, as in our and the Geneva version, as if it were ἡ παραβασις του νομου. Wicliff avoided this error and rendered ανομια, *wickedness:* Tyndale and Cranmer, *unrighteousness:* Rhemish, *iniquitie*]. The Apostle Paul's description of Antichrist shows the same connexion between sin and lawlessness; for he calls him

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"the lawless one"—*lawlessness* being the mode in which, in his case and in those who follow him, sin will develop itself. "He shall think to change times and laws." He will "spurn every band, and break every yoke." This specific meaning of ανομια however (which in some passages it bears in virtue of its contextual connexion, or else contrast with other terms), is not always to be maintained. In some passages it is taken in the general sense of *wickedness* or *iniquity*, which is the best translation of רשע.

The three terms employed in this verse, *viz.*, "the wicked"—"sinners"—"scorners" are intended to denote *contrasted*, but not *opposed* classes; nor are they intended to refer, as some have supposed, to different periods of the exhibition of evil. It is indeed true that there are three great periods in which evil has been, or will be, allowed in a peculiar manner to develop its power, *viz.*, at the Flood,—at the Cross,—and at the coming of Antichrist. But neither of these periods exhibit one only form of evil. In the days of Noah and of Jesus, the scorner was as truly present as he will be in that future day when he shall glory in the pomp and might of Antichrist, his King. From the days of Cain until now, lawlessness, and sin, and scorning, have never been absent from the earth. They all confronted Noah, and then gathered in far fiercer enmity *against* the Holy One of God. All totality of evil gathered *against* Christ:—all totality of evil will be gathered *to* Antichrist.

In Scripture the same persons or things are frequently presented under different terms, or symbols, or types, or parables, in order that this variety of *aspect* may render the apprehension more complete. Contrast is intended, but not opposition: the predominancy of

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any particular feature or characteristic, leading to the use of such terms as are best suited to express such predominancy. Thus if it be desired that the attention should be directed to that rebellious insubjection of heart, from which *deeds of impiety* (ασεβεια), *lawlessness* (ανομια), and *oppressive wickedness* (πονηρια) flow, the expression used is רשע: if aberration from the right and appointed path is denoted חטא, derived from חטא, *to miss the mark, to err* (ἁμαρτανω), is used: whilst the scoffer or scorner, proudly seating himself in his seat of assumed authority, represents the insolent contemptuousness of evil. "Counsel," "way," "seat," are the words adapted to these several conditions—"counsel" connecting itself with the rebellious condition of the heart: "way" with the erring step: "seat" with the proud assumption of authority.

Some have wished to render מושב *session*, in the sense of assembly: but the reasons urged against this by Hengstenberg are conclusive.

VERSE 2

For seeing that his delight is in the law of Jehovah, etc., he shall therefore be, etc.] Gesenius observes in his Lexicon when explaining the force of כי־אם, that אם "may refer to an interposed or parenthetic clause and each particle retain its own native force." He quotes as an example 1 Sam. xx. 9, "God forbid that [כי] (if [אם] I knew assuredly that evil were determined from my father to come upon thee) I should not show it to thee." In the present case, however, Gesenius does not separate these particles, but takes them unitedly, as meaning *but if*, as referring to the same clause after a negation, and translates thus, "Blessed is the man who walketh not (if he walk not) but if his delight is in the law, etc."

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It is, however, far better to adopt the first rendering to which Gesenius refers, and to take each particle separately: for, as has been observed by Dr Tregelles, if we take the particles combinedly in this passage, we should be obliged to go against the accentuation — Mappikh with P'sik being in the Psalms a *disjunctive*— and although the accents have no Divine authority, yet we should not, without necessity, reject their guidance. It is better, therefore, to translate thus, "for or because (since his delight is in the law of Jehovah, etc.) he shall therefore be." כי in the sense of "because" is in several places followed by ו, denoting the inference, and then ו is best rendered by *therefore*. See, for example, Mal. iii. 6 "Because (כי) I am Jehovah . . . therefore (ו) ye, *etc.*"

The law of Jehovah]. This is to be understood of the Scripture as a whole—תורה the law, is from ירה *to point with the hand, to direct.* The whole of God's word is a "directory."

Continually meditates]. יהגה—continuousness or perpetuity is often the force of the Hebrew future. Compare δωσουσι Rev. iv. 9.

VERSE 3

Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper]. Some, in translating this clause, continue the metaphor, and render "whatsoever it (the tree) produceth, shall prosper." But it is far better to retain the rendering of our version. It is common in Scripture to pass suddenly from the figure to the subject to which the figure applies. It adds to the force and vividness of description.

VERSE 5

The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment]. Some wish to render this, "the ungodly shall not rise,"

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as if it referred to the wicked being excluded from "the first resurrection." It is true, indeed, that they will be excluded. "The rest of the dead lived not (*ουκ εζησαν*) until the thousand years were finished." But this is evidently not the subject of this passage. Resurrection would not be expressed by "rising *in* the judgment and *in* the congregation of the righteous," for both these clauses are connected with יקמו. קום frequently bears the sense of standing, in the sense of establishment. Thus Is. vii. 7, "*It shall not stand:*" and again, viii. 10, "Speak the word and *it shall not stand:*" and Jer. xliv. 29, "My words shall surely stand." (lit. standing shall stand.)

VERSE 6

For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous]. Observe the abstract force of the participle יודע. Jehovah est *noscens—one knowing*. He may not, at present, *manifestly* act upon His knowledge: but it *essentially characterizes* Him, and yet a little while and it shall be fully proved that He observes, delights in, and remembers the ways of His servants.

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ON THE SECOND PSALM

ONE of the chief objects of the Psalms is to contrast the condition of the earth whilst under the supremacy of evil, with its future condition when "the sovereignty of the world" shall have become "the sovereignty of our Lord and of His Christ" (Rev. xi. 15).* At present, Satan is the Deceiver (ὁ πλανων) not merely of individuals, but of nations and their Governors. The streams of national life are poisoned at their source. In the Apocalypse, which treats of the close of the present dispensation, Satan is especially described as the Deceiver of the nations (Rev. xii. 9, and xx. 3)†—as wearing the diadems of the Roman World (Rev. xii. 3) and then giving them to Antichrist (Rev. xiii. 2), and as finally gathering the kings of the whole Roman World (της οικουμενης ὁλης) "to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Of that great gathering this Psalm treats. It speaks of the time when not merely "the peoples," but *their kings and rulers* shall openly confederate against God. "The

*Εγενετο ἡ βασιλεια του κοσμου, του Κυριου ἡμων και του χριστου αυτου. Rev. xi. 15.

† ὁ Σατανας, ὁ πλανων την οικουμενην ὁλην. Rev. xii. 9. See also Rev. xx. 3—"that he should not *any longer* deceive the nations"—words which very forcibly show how completely he deceives them *now*.

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kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against Jehovah and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us." This is the consummation of that "lawlessness" which makes him who heads it emphatically "the lawless one" (ὁ ἄνομος, 2 Thess. ii.). Armageddon (*i.e.*, the Hill of Megiddo, in the north-west of Palestine, marked in the Roman maps as "*Legio*") is to be the place of their *gathering*: "the valley of Jehoshaphat" (Joel iii.) under the walls of Jerusalem, the place of their *destruction*. The nations will be allowed to progress to this completeness of apostasy; but when that has been fully reached, "THEN (אז) shall He"—Adonai, Christ the Lord, "speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure." See also Zech. xiv. "Jehovah shall go forth and fight against those nations as when He fought in the day of battle: and His feet shall stand in that day on the mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the mount of Olives shall cleave, *etc.* . . . and Jehovah my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." See likewise Joel iii. 13. Thus the power and glory of the Lord God of Israel shall, as of old, and even far more wondrously (for heaven and earth shall be shaken), confront the proud rebellion of earth. How would Christians cease to look to the governments of the earth and to national enlightenment and progress, as the pillar on which they rest their hopes for the earth's future, if they received the words of Joel, and Zechariah, and of this Psalm!

Many, forgetful of the well-known rule respecting the *germinant* fulfilment of prophecy, have virtually quenched the light of this Psalm by regarding it as finally accomplished when Pilate, Herod, and Israel,

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gathered together against Jesus and His disciples. It is indeed true that the commencing verses of this Psalm received *a* fulfilment both then and on every other occasion in which the powers of earth have confederated against Christ and His Truth. The principles which are to attain their maturity at the close of the dispensation, have long been germinating. The heads of society, secular, philosophic and religious, had begun to exhibit when the Lord Jesus was on earth, an indifferentism and scepticism about Truth, which was making them reckless of all its restraints. He who has learned contemptuously to say, "What is Truth?" *will not be restrained by* Truth. If they be personally untroubled by its voice—if its testimonies reach them not, so as to harass their consciences, their indifferentism may be content with despising Truth; but if its voice be heard upbraidingly, or if its power thwart any of their designs of evil, then they persecute and trample it to the dust. Such was Pilate; and not only Pilate, but multitudes beside, both in Greece, and Rome, and Jerusalem, at the time when the Great Witness of Truth testified. "The mystery of lawlessness," said the Apostle, "doth already work." The final development of iniquity, therefore, is only the matured form of that which has long been advancing: for what is there in the flower, or in the fruit, that is not hidden in the bud? But the descriptions of Scripture are not *limited* to the embryo form. They extend to the matured development —the description of the greater necessarily including the less. We are not, indeed, to neglect premonitory fulfilments. By means of what has been, we are taught what is to be. But if we mistake premonitory fulfilment for final accomplishment, we deceive ourselves by the very light that is intended to be our guide.

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The word "THEN" (אז) *proves* that this passage is yet to receive its full accomplishment. "THEN shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure." He has never yet done this. On the contrary, His long-suffering mercy has waited, and permitted violence to prosper: He has allowed Truth and its servants to be trampled down. The cry has yet to be heard and answered, "Lord, how long wilt Thou not judge and avenge our blood on those that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. vi. 10.)

The sixth verse: "Yet have I inaugurated (נסכתי) My king, upon My holy hill of Zion," *etc.*, stands intermediately between the two divisions of the Psalm. In contrast with the vain purpose of the raging nations, this verse reveals Jehovah's purpose of establishing the Government of Christ as Lord of Israel and the earth, on Mount Zion. "Yet *have* I inaugurated:"—the *past* tense is used; for future events are spoken of as past, in order to denote their certainty. Thus it is said of Israel, when as yet they had reached but the edge of the wilderness:—"Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation:" and again, "Whom He justified, them He also glorified."

The inauguration of Christ on Zion will doubtless be an event marked as visibly and as solemnly as the descent of Jehovah on Sinai, when He there introduced the First Covenant. With no less solemnity, but with increased and more blessed (because more peaceful) manifestations of glory, will the government of Christ under the Second Covenant be installed on Mount Zion. The miraculous exaltation of Zion above the hills is prophesied of both by Isaiah and by Micah. "It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the house of Jehovah shall be established in the top of the

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mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it" (Is. ii. and Micah iv.). It is mentioned also as the place where divine glory will be manifestly present in protective power: "and Jehovah will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and on her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence." And in Psalm lxviii. we read, "The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan; an high hill as the hill of Bashan. Why leap ye, ye high hills? This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, Jehovah will dwell in it for ever. The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord (Adonai) is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place." This passage sufficiently indicates the glory that will be connected with Zion as the centre of the Divine government in the earth. But, as there was an interval between the destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts at the Red Sea, and the descent of Jehovah on Sinai, so there will be an interval between the destruction of Antichrist with his hosts, and the inauguration of Christ on Zion. This inauguration will be a result, but not an mmediate result, of Christ's manifesting Himself in the way described in Rev. xix. as "King of kings and Lord of lords."

The morning star arises at the moment of the earth's deepest darkness. So when the Lord Jesus returns, evil will be dominant in the earth in a way in which it never yet has been, and never will be again. Antichrist will be in the plenitude of power at the head of all the Ten Kingdoms of the Roman World. Christendom, that is, those parts of the earth which will be neither heathen, nor subjected to the power of Antichrist, will teem, even as they already do, with corruption. As

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a general description, "darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples."

Accordingly, the avowed object for which Christ assumes His millennial power is that He may put down this giant strength of evil and subdue every enemy. "He must reign," says the Apostle, "until He hath put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. xv. 25.) Indeed so much is the subjugation of enemies characteristic of the millennial reign, that it terminates as soon as the last enemy has been subdued. We must beware, therefore, of supposing that every enemy is suddenly and effectually subdued by the judgments which Christ inflicts at the moment of His appearing in glory. His first act will be to remove (changed and glorified) from the earthly into the heavenly branch of His kingdom, all those who are sanctified by faith in Him; and to remove, by means of angels, into the unseen place of torment, all who merely profess His name—all who come under the name of "Tares" (*see* Matt. xiii.). Christendom will thus end. On the day of His appearing also, after having been joined by His saints in the air, He will come with them to the Mount of Olives (Zech. xiv.), and will utterly destroy all *the armies* that have been gathered under Antichrist with the view of blotting out Jerusalem (*see* Ps. lxxxiii.). At the same time will perish all the unrepentant in Israel who are found in Jerusalem, or the land. But the judgments that will be inflicted upon *the nations* that have either been reigned over by Antichrist, or have been associated with him in his last evil enterprise against Jerusalem (*see* Psalm already quoted), will be administered more gradually. They will fall with especial weight upon Edom, Moab, Ammon, Egypt, Arabia, and Tyre. Indeed it would not appear that any except those of irrespon-

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sible age are spared, either in these regions, or in any part of the Roman World. The distant heathen, however, "who have not heard His fame nor seen His glory" (Isaiah lxvi. 19), will be for the most part spared as individuals, although they may be broken up *as nations*.

These overwhelming and destroying judgments, however, will not continue after the glory of Christ has been fixed on Zion, and after Israel has been fully gathered under its shelter. After the inauguration of Christ's glory on Zion, the order of the millennial government, both in Heaven and earth, will be fully established. Israel will begin "to blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit;" and evil will hide its head, until for a brief moment it raises it again, without result, save in its own extinction, at the close of the millennial age.

The sixth verse, which thus reveals the fixed purpose of Jehovah in establishing the glory and power of Christ "upon Zion, His holy mountain," is appropriately followed by the address of Christ, as King, to those kings and governors who are spared after the termination of those judgments which usher in the Millennium, and under which Antichrist will perish. From the seventh verse onward, the words are the words of Christ as the Messiah-King. He first recites what Jehovah had said unto Him at the time of His resurrection from the dead. "Jehovah SAID unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron: Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Such were the words addressed unto the Son by the Father at the time of His resurrection (*see* Acts xiii. 33). As yet, seeing that the time

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of long-suffering and grace towards the nations is not past, He hath not "asked" to be invested with this power. But when the time shall come for Christ to use the words of this Psalm, He will have "asked," and He will have been brought before the Ancient of days as described in Dan. vii., and have been invested with the power of earth, and have begun to exercise it. On the fact of His having assumed this power is grounded His exhortation to the kings and rulers that will have been spared. "NOW, therefore, O ye kings, be wise; be instructed, ye judges of the earth: serve Jehovah with fear, and rejoice with reverence. Do homage to the Son, lest ye perish from the way when His wrath is kindled, yea, but a little." They to whom these words will be addressed, will have seen how Antichrist and others who have rebelled against Jehovah and His Christ, have perished; and at last they will learn wisdom. "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him" (Ps. lxxii. 10, 11). Universal outward homage will thus be paid to the King whom Jehovah has inaugurated on Zion. Yet it is not said that all who render this outward homage are *blessed.* That word "blessed" is confined to those *who trust in Him.* "Blessed are all they that trust in Him." All in Israel, and very many among the Gentiles shall truly trust in Him in that day: but there are others who will render only a feigned obedience. See Psalm xviii. 44. "The sons of the stranger shall dissemble to Me." "Filii alieni mentientur mihi." (*Jerome.*) "The strange children shall dissemble with Me." (*Prayer Book Version.*) Mendelssohn's comment is: "They seem to be willing and trusty servants; yet in truth, in their heart

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they hate Me : but the fear of Me hath fallen on them." From these " strange children " will finally spring the last great Apostasy, when for a little season Satan is unbound.

But although Christ does not at the present moment legislate for and direct " the nations," as He will when the words of this Psalm shall be fulfilled, yet its prophetic voice *might* be heard, and ought to be heard, even now, by nations and their Governors. Shall they at present despise and dishonour Him who is already made Lord and Christ—to whom Jehovah hath already said, " Thou art My Son ; . . . Ask of Me, and I will give Thee, etc." ? Christ although not yet seated on His own millennial throne is seated on His Father's throne and administers all its power (*see* Rev. v.). He hath all power in heaven and in earth. It is vain, therefore, for nations to deceive themselves with the thought that they can do homage to God as the Governor of all, if they refuse to own Christ as the Person, even now, invested with all the glory and power of the throne of the Majesty of the Heavens. To deny the fact of Christ's present exaltation and authority, is virtual atheism. It is true indeed that the acknowledgment of this fact does not make men real Christians : but the denial of it makes them Infidels. A nation that by its official organs governmentally acknowledges the Lordship and Mediatorship of Christ as a fact, does not thereby become Christian in the sense of being brought into the *Church* of God ; but it is Christian in another, and not unimportant, sense. It is Christian as contrasted with nations that governmentally refuse to acknowledge Christ, but acknowledge Mahomet or Buddha, or any other false prophet, or false god ; or who, like the Jews, pretend to acknowledge Jehovah and, at the same time

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reject Him whom Jehovah hath anointed as Lord of all.

The natural blessings that have for many centuries flowed down upon our own unworthy country, as a consequence of having outwardly owned the name of *Christ* and His one Mediatorship, must be obvious to all whose hearts are not judicially blinded. But of late years the recognition of Christ has begun to be relinquished. Whether Governors own, or do not own *Him* "by whom kings rule, and princes decree judgment," has been thought a matter of indifference. It has been thought immaterial whether men own Christ alone as the "one Lord," and the "one Mediator;" or whether they bow down idolatrously to Mary and seek the mediation of "the queen of heaven," or despise mediatorship altogether. Even in this our own favoured land it is beginning to be deemed immaterial whether Governors, and even authorized religious teachers, own the supreme authority of the Word of God, or whether they give themselves over to philosophic Pantheism and trample under foot the Blood of atonement and every other distinctive truth revealed in the Scripture. That ear must indeed be deaf (shall I say judicially deafened ?) that hears not already the cry, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

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NOTES ON PSALM II.

VERSES 1 to 5

"Why have the Gentiles furiously gathered together, and why do the peoples meditate a vain thing?"

The Gentiles גוים]. This word is frequently rendered "heathen" in our version—often a very objectionable rendering, inasmuch as the nations thus described are frequently *not* heathen. In the present case, for example, the nations who will form this great confederacy will be the nations of the Roman World (της οικουμενης) —nations, that after having had the advantage of all the light that God has ever sent into the earth, and having for the most part professed Christianity, will have apostatized from *all* Truth, and given themselves over to the service and worship of Antichrist. The same alteration in the translation of גוים should be made in Joel iii. 9, 11, 12, "Proclaim ye this among *the Gentiles*." "Come all *ye Gentiles*." "Let *the Gentiles* be awakened and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there will I sit to judge all *the Gentiles* round about." The nations here addressed are those whose history forms the subject of the prophecy of Daniel. They will first assemble at Armageddon, and thence advance into the valley of Jehoshaphat, where they will be trodden in the wine-press of wrath.*

* They are the same nations as are referred to in Rev. xvi. 14. "For they are the spirits of devils working miracles, that go forth to the kings of the whole (Roman) world (της οικουμενης ὁλης. Compare Luke ii. 1), to gather them together to the battle of that day—the great day of God, the Almighty."

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"Gentiles" is the translation which should be always adopted for גוים in the Old Testament, and for ἔθνη in the New, whenever those words are used in contrast with Israel. There may be a few passages where "heathen" might be retained; but, as a general rule, "Gentiles," or "nations" should be substituted for "heathen," wherever that word occurs in our version of the Old Testament.

רגשו]. This verb occurs besides in the Chaldee of Dan. vi. 7, where the presidents and satraps "assembled" in haste and anger to the King against Daniel. The substantive רגשה occurs in Ps. lxiv. 2, as indicating a *tumultuous* assembly. In Ps. lv. 14 it is used, not in an evil sense, but implying strongly companionship and unity—"We walked to the house of God *in company*," ברגש. The translation, however, adopted in the Acts, *viz.*, ἵνα τί ἐφρύαξαν ἔθνη, shows that rage and the expression of rage are thoughts to be connected with this word as used in this Psalm. Deliberate purpose, fury and assemblage are denoted. Compare Is. xvii. 12, 13. "Woe to the multitude of many peoples, (עמים) which make a noise like the noise of the seas; and to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters! The nations (לאמים) shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them, *etc.*"

And [*why do*] *the peoples meditate a vain thing*?]. יהגו, continuous future, *persist* in meditating. לאמים, *peoples* or *nations*—λαοί Acts iv. 25.

When the patriarchal government of families and clans under their natural heads, gave place to their union under a formally recognized Governor, they who were thus united became לאם. "From the obsolete אמם comes אם, a mother; whence אם a nation—

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a people sprung from one mother, sufficiently numerous to constitute *a kingdom*. Hence, the Hebrew writers say, 'there is no nation (לאם) where there is no kingdom.' (Non est natio nisi regnum.)" *Bythner*. In its strict sense, therefore, לאם would denote persons derived from a common stock united as a nation under a recognized chief: but it also became used to denote any who were distinguished by any kind of national organization, even though they might not be of the same kindred. In this last sense it would be used to denote civilized and duly governed nations, as opposed to barbarous tribes. In this sense I understand it in the verse before us. Those who will conspire against Jehovah and His Christ in this last great confederacy, will be the most ordered and most civilized nations upon earth.

Some, however, think that לאמים here denotes nations of common origin,* *viz.*, those who are connected with Israel by common descent from Lot or Abraham, such as the Moabites, Edomites, Arabians, etc. No doubt these nations will take a very prominent part in this last conspiracy against Israel. The three first, after

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* Thus *Geier*: ולאמים—Et [quare] *nationes*—hoc est, secundum Lucam, λαοι Ισραηλ. Acts iv. 27. Nimirum vox לאום .....vi originis suæ nationem exprimit, cujus commune est stemma aut mater, veluti עם accipitur pro populo promiscue, etiamsi ex variis confluxerit locis atque gentibus." *Geier in locum.* So also Cocceius—לאם—*multitudo unâ origine glorians*, ut Israelitæ et Idumæi. Ita et inter ipsos Israelitas tribus sunt לאמים atque hoc modo גוים et לאמים *nationes* distinguuntur in Ps. ii. *Gentes* alienæ a prosapia et politia *populi* Dei; *nationes* filii patriarcharum. Acts iv. 27. "συν εθνεσι και λαοις Ισραηλ." This passage in the Acts is capable of, and no doubt bears, a different interpretation. There is not the slightest evidence that לאם is used for ממה, a tribe, or that λαοι is used for φυλαι.

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escaping, we are told, out of the hand of Antichrist (*see* Dan. xi. 41), will unite with him in the attempt to blot out the name of Israel. "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee: the tabernacles of Edom and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes; Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre; ASSUR (the Assyrian, Antichrist) also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot" (Ps. lxxxiii. 4-8). There can be no doubt, therefore, that the nations *kindred* to Israel, unite and become prominent in this last confederacy against them; and if לאמים had been used in Psalm lxxxiii., there could have been little question as to its meaning. But if we review the passages in which this word occurs, there are none from which its restricted sense could be satisfactorily proved. Gen. xxv. 23, is not decisive. And although λαοι Ισραηλ (peoples of Israel, Acts iv. 27) may seem to favour the thought that "the peoples" described as לאמים in Ps. ii. have some connexion with Israel, yet it must be remembered that in Acts iv. the second Psalm is *applied* merely, *not interpreted in respect of its final accomplishment;* and in all *applications* of Scripture, the resemblances are general—not specific. The expression "peoples of Israel," which is certainly peculiar, was one very applicable to the strange condition of Israel at the time to which the passage in the Acts refers. Instead of being as they once had been, *one* people speaking the *one* language of Canaan, Israel had virtually become, in consequence of their sin, many *peoples*, speaking all the diverse tongues of earth—"Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites and the dwellers

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in Mesopotamia. . . . Cretes and Arabians "—in a word, "*Jews of every nation under heaven.*" Israel, therefore, was at that time made up of divers peoples who might well be called "*peoples* of Israel "—all united with the Gentiles against the Messiah of Israel. So, at an hour yet future, the same mighty Gentiles joined by an assemblage of peoples greater than has ever yet been seen, will gather together against Israel themselves.

ריק *A vain thing—κενον, ματαιον.*] Compare Is. viii. 9. "Associate yourselves, O ye peoples, . . . take counsel together, and *it shall come to nought;* speak the word, and *it shall not stand:* for God is with us."

The kings of the earth set themselves]. This verse has been sometimes carelessly applied to the rebellion of subjects against their earthly governors: but that is not its meaning. It treats of the rebellion of nations *under and together with their rulers* against Jehovah and Christ. The special subject of this Psalm is the apostasy of governmental power. It concerns "*the kings*" of the prophetic earth and "*the rulers.*"

Set themselves]. יתיצבו, *παρεστησαν ἑαυτους*, present themselves, take their stand as against a foe.

רוזנים]. The subordinate rulers or magistrates: they amongst whom there is so frequently rivalry and discord, are here said to be "*founded together*" (for such is the literal meaning of נוסדו־יחד) joined together like a compact foundation. These words strikingly show the strength and compactness of this great infidel rebellion —the result of the action of the spirits of devils working miracles that are to go forth to gather unto this confederacy (*see* Rev. xvi). How contrasted this firmness with the present want of coherency among the servants of the Truth!

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Let us break their bands asunder, etc.] This will be the universal cry *then;* but the principle of this lawlessness is found wherever the restraints that the Word of God puts on human *thought* and *action*, are despised. Society is every day learning to do this more and more. Sacerdotalism in all its various forms disgusts; and men make its vain pretensions an excuse for their believing nothing.

One that sitteth (ישב) in the heavens, etc.] When *indefinite* expressions like this are applied to Christ or to the Father, they denote that which is unsearchable —past finding out. Indefinite expressions are therefore to be regarded as one of the strongest modes of ascribing *Deity*. Compare Hebrews vii.—"One of whom it is testified (μαρτυρουμενος) that he liveth." And Rev. iv. —"on the throne one sitting." (καθημενος). And 1 Tim. iii. 16.—"One who (ὁς) was manifested in the flesh, *etc.*"

In Ps. cx. we read, "Jehovah said unto my Lord, sit Thou at My right hand until I shall have set (ἑως αν θω, Heb. 1) Thy foes a footstool for Thy feet." These words are addressed to Christ as One rejected by Israel and the earth; and who, as a consequence of such rejection sat down, not on His own Messiah-Throne, but on "the Father's throne" (*see* Rev. iii. 21.) As One, therefore, who hath not yet occupied "the throne of His father David," nor "the high place (המרום) of Israel" (*see* Ps. vii. 7), He is described *distinctively* throughout the present dispensation, as One seated in the heavens, hidden with God. Compare Ps. cx. 5. "Adonai at Thy right hand;"—that is, Christ, the Lord, who is now at Thy (Jehovah's) right hand, "shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath."

Adonai shall have them in derision]. These words are identical with those just quoted from Ps. cx. Adonai is

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sometimes applied to Jehovah, and to Christ as Jehovah. At other times, as in the verse before us, it is applied to Christ distinctively, in an official sense; denoting (like Κυριος in Greek) the "Lordship" to which He has been appointed. "God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both *Lord* and Christ" (Acts ii. 36). "To us there is one God, the Father, . . . and *one Lord*, Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. viii. 6). When in the Old Testament Adonai is thus used to denote the "Lordship" of Christ, it will be found that some act of Jehovah is spoken of in the context in the way of distinction or contrast. Thus in Ps. cx. 1, "Jehovah said unto my Lord (Adon.)." And in 6th verse of this Psalm Jehovah speaks, "Yet have I inaugurated My king (Him who had just before been described as Adonai —one seated in the heavens) on Zion, the mountain of My holiness."

"*One that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: Adonai shall mock at them.* THEN (אז) *shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure.*"

THEN *shall He speak, etc.*]. The word "THEN" which is emphatic, shows that whatever periods there may have been to which this Psalm may be *applied*, yet that there is only one period of its definite accomplishment.

VERSE 6

"*And I have inaugurated my king on Zion, the mountain of my holiness.* [*or my holiness-mountain*]."

And I, etc.]. These words suddenly spoken by Jehovah, divide the Psalm. The former verses had spoken of the attempt of the kings and rulers of the earth, and of the frustration of that attempt by the power of Him who was seated at God's right hand. This verse tells us

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of the event that will immediately follow the overthrow of that great rebellion. Jehovah will then accomplish His long declared purpose of inaugurating His King—Christ, the Messiah of Israel, on Zion the mountain of His holiness How contrasted this act with the designs of those who were intending to blot out the names of Jehovah, and of Christ, and of Israel, from the earth! *

I have already observed that Scripture, especially in its prophetic parts, is accustomed to speak of future events as past: so their certainty is indicated, and vividness is given to the description.

I have inaugurated,] נסך, which I have rendered "*to inaugurate,*" means properly "*to pour out;*" hence applied to libations and drink-offerings like σπενδομαι in Greek. Whence Is. xxx. 1. נסך מסכה, to *ratify a treaty by libations* (σπενδεσθαι σπονδην) because the ancients in making covenants were accustomed to offer libations. Compare Latin *spondere* from σπονδη (*Gesenius*). In the same way, this word may be applied to the solemn inauguration or establishment of any one in a place of dignity and power. Compare Proverbs viii. 23, "I was *set up* from everlasting."

It has already been observed, that the inauguration of Christ on Zion in the full ordered glory of the millennial reign, will be some time subsequent to the destruction of Antichrist and the deliverance of Israel from his grasp; just as of old there was an interval between the destruction of Pharaoh at the Red Sea, and the time when God descended on Sinai, and there *formally*

* There is no objection to our translating ו, *but*—(εγω δε) in this passage; only we must not attach to it a force too strongly *adversative*. The object of the verse is to speak of this great act of Jehovah, as connected with, and in sequence to, that which had preceded. *I* is to be strongly emphasized.

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assumed the legislation and government of Israel. And as the introduction of the First Covenant on Sinai was glorious, so will the formal establishment of the Second Covenant in the power of its grace on Zion and the inauguration of Him who will there reign in that power, be more abundantly glorious. When first He manifests His glory, arising suddenly, like "the morning star," at the moment of the night's deepest darkness, His relation to the earth must necessarily be one of judgment. He will "destroy them that destroy the earth" (Rev. xi. 18): "the earth shall fear and be still" (Ps. lxxvi. 8). But when this shall have been accomplished—when He shall have done His work, His strange work, and brought to pass His act, His strange act (Is. xxviii. 21), then will He arise like "the sun with healing in his wings," and the peaceful flow of millennial blessing towards Israel and the nations, shall in its proper order commence. In the interval between the destruction of Antichrist and the inauguration of the Messiah-King on Zion, there is much to be accomplished. During this period, scattered Israel will, slowly and in divers ways, be gathered to their land. Some will be gathered by the repentant nations (*See* Is. xiv. 1, Is. xviii. 7, and lxvi. 20). Others will be "led into the wilderness" (Hosea ii. 14), and there "pleaded with face to face," and the rebels purged out from among them (*See* Ezekiel xx. 33-38). During this interval also, Christ will *in heaven* arrange the order of the heavenly branch of His kingdom and appoint the rewards of His risen saints. The heavenly City (which during the Millennium, though connected with Zion and Jerusalem, will be above them, and *not in the earth*) will, when the glory of Christ is established on Zion, assume its appointed place. During this interval too, before the ordered glory of the Millennium

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is established, the Gog and Magog nations, seeing the Land of Israel quiet and apparently defenceless, will come up against it " to take a spoil, and to take a prey " in the manner described in Ezekiel xxxviii. 11, 12.* But Israel will be then avowedly taken under the care of the mighty One of Jacob. They will no longer be " Lo-ammi." The times of the Gentiles will have ended,

* It may seem wonderful that these nations should dare to make such an attempt immediately after the destruction of Antichrist and his hosts, and after the palpable proofs then given of Israel having been restored to the protection of their God. But terror never abidingly affects hearts unreached by grace. We read that Amalek of old, unterrified by the ruin that had fallen on Pharaoh and the hosts of Egypt, went forth to fight with Israel between the Red Sea and Sinai: nor did all that Balak knew from facts and from Balaam respecting the might and the destiny of Israel, prevent him from resisting them.

Care must be taken not to confound the invasion of Gog, described in Ezekiel, with that mentioned in the Revelation. The former takes place at the very commencement—the latter at the close of the Millennium, so that they are events thoroughly distinct. Nor must the Gog and Magog nations be confounded with those whom Antichrist is to lead. Antichrist is the last head of the nations of the Roman World—nations appointed by God to trample down Jerusalem till the days of her punishment shall be ended. The assaults, therefore, of Antichrist on Israel up to the day of his fall, will prosper. " He will take the spoil, and take the prey, and tread them down like the mire of the streets " (Is. x.). But the assaults of the Gog and Magog nations will *not* prosper. They will attempt to vex Israel after the time for their being vexed is over, and when the time for them to be sheltered and comforted will have come. In assailing Israel they will find that they have rushed upon the thick bosses of the buckler of the Almighty. The central parts of Asia to the east and north-east of the Caspian, is the region to which the Gog and Magog nations belong. Uncivilized and semi-barbarous, they stand in this respect also, markedly contrasted with the intellectual and polished nations whom Antichrist is to lead.

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and Israel will no longer be allowed to be trampled down. Accordingly, though this fierce gathering of the Gog and Magog (that is, the central Asiatic) nations shall probably far exceed in multitude the civilized European hosts that will previously have assailed them from Armageddon, yet Israel will remain unaffected by the storm. Not a hair of their heads will be harmed. The vast hosts of their assailants will be suddenly overwhelmed with utter ruin. "Seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord God" (Ez. xxxix. 12). The destruction of the hosts of Antichrist and the deliverance of Israel from their grasp, will be the great proof to the world that God has interfered to curb and to humble the power of man: the subsequent destruction of the Gog and Magog hosts will be the evidence that God has not only interfered *once*, but that He *abidingly* rules.

On Zion the mountain of my holiness]. Zion was not the place where the Temple was built, but it was the place where "the citadel" or "castle" of Jerusalem stood: often called "the City of David." See 1. Chron. xi. 5, 7, 8. "David took the castle of Zion, which is the city of David. And David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called it the city of David. And he built the city round about." In the time of Paul we still find the same expression "castle" applied to the strong-hold of Zion. "The chief captain commanded that he (Paul) should be brought into the castle" (τὴν παρεμβολήν). The height of Zion was therefore always regarded as the place where the protective power that sheltered Jerusalem and its Temple was established. Hence in the

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Millennium, Zion is called "the mountain of the house of Jehovah;" not because it is the site of the Temple (for it will not be) but because the power will be there collocated which will subserve and watch over that house. This explains a verse in Rev. xx., where the last great gathering against God at the close of the Millennium is described. "They went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp (or *citadel* την παρεμβολην, the same word as in Acts xxi. 34) *of the saints* about, and the beloved city:" in other words, they compass Zion and Jerusalem; but fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them, and then all things are made new. It is plain from this and many other passages, that the height of Zion during the Millennium, will as truly be a seat of heavenly glory as was Sinai when God thence legislated for Israel.

VERSES 7 TO 9

"*I will declare* (*or make proclamation*) *in reference to the decree, Jehovah said unto me, My Son art thou; I this day have begotten thee. Ask of me and I will give thee the Gentiles for thine inheritance, and for thy possession the uttermost parts of the earth. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron: as the vessels of a potter shalt thou shiver them.*"

I will declare] Or *publish*, in the sense of making proclamation—אספרה. *In relation to*, or *according to the decree.* אל־חק. The word אל is used in the sense of "*regarding* any thing, having respect or regard to any thing: hence *as to, in respect to,* Ex. xiv. 5 (compare εις μεν ταυτα); *because of, propter.* It is also used as expressive of rule or standard; *secundum, according to*; Josh. xv. 13, according to the command" [Gesenius]. Phillips translates, *concerning the decree,* and adds, "the

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particle אל has been variously interpreted in this place by different writers. The sense of *to* has been given to it, and so Messiah, who is now the speaker, is supposed to say; 'I will speak to the decree,' that is, I will publish strictly and to the letter, the statute or decree of Jehovah as He has declared it to Me. Mendlessohn has 'Zum Gesetz,' '*for the decree*,' which is thus explained in the *Beor*—' in order that it (what I now publish) may be "*for a decree*," among the people that they may not rebel against me.' Kimchi in his book of roots, takes אל here to be the sign of the accusative, as if it were equivalent to את, and thus the Chaldee understood it: . . . 'I will recite the treaty or statute:' so also the Syr. and Arab. There is not, however, as far as I am aware, any other instance of אל standing for את, and therefore we ought to regard it here as something more than a mere sign" (*Phillips in locum*).

My Son art thou.] The words here recited, to end of 9th verse, are the decree or statute of Jehovah "in reference to" which, or "in accordance with" which, Christ as the King that will then have been inaugurated on Zion, publishes the warning contained in the words that follow. The words that follow are to be regarded, not as the decree, but as a preliminary notification or warning respecting the course of action about to be entered on in conformity with the words of Jehovah which are recited, and which form the decree referred to.

Jehovah said unto me.] That is, at a time long passed, *viz.*, at the resurrection of Christ. Jehovah *then* said unto Him, "My Son art Thou: I this day have begotten Thee." That these words belong to the period of the resurrection, is proved by Acts xiii. 33. The *order* of the words in the Hebrew should be noted, as marking the thoughts intended to be *emphasized.*

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Ask of me, etc.] The time for Christ to ask according to these words has not yet come; nor will, *until* the Gospel has been first fully preached as a witness to all the Gentiles; and *until* the full number (το πληρωμα Rom. xi. 25) that is to be "taken out from among the Gentiles" (*see* Acts xv. 14.) shall have come in; and *until* Antichristianism shall have ripened and brought forth its appointed fruits. THEN, He will ask, and as a result, will be brought before the Ancient of days and solemnly invested with the authority of earth as described in Dan. vii. 9. "And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him."

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron.] Some in this verse derive תרעם from רעה *to rule as a shepherd*, instead of from רעע *to break*. This derivation has apparent confirmation from the Sept. translation (ποιμανεις) being adopted in Rev. ii. 27. But when the Sept. gives the *general* sense of the Hebrew correctly it is frequently adopted in the New Testament. In such cases, however, we do not renounce the statement of the Old Testament, but combine it with that made in the New. "Thou shalt rule, and in ruling break." I say this on the supposition that we retain the reading of the Hebrew text.

VERSES 10 TO 12

"Now therefore, O ye kings, have understanding. Be corrected, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss ye the Son lest he be angered and ye perish in the way, what time his wrath shall suddenly kindle. O the happiness of all that are trusters in Him."

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Now, therefore, O ye kings, have understanding.] *Now* is emphatic. *Now*, O ye kings, seeing that I have asked for and received the long promised power, have understanding hearts. Submit to the correction of your ways: do homage unto Me, and obey Me. Such is the notification mercifully promulgated by the Messiah-King to the spared rulers and nations in the millennial earth, that they might be wise and submit themselves, and not perish.

Kiss the Son.] That is, formally recognize and do obeisance unto Him. בר the Chaldee for *Son*, so used in Ezra v. 1 : v. 2 : vi. 14 : and in Dan. iii. 25 : v. 22 : vii. 13. Also in Proverbs xxxi. 2. "What my *son*, and what the *son* of my womb, and what the *son* of my vows ?" "The passage in Proverbs," says Dr Phillips, "seems to set the matter at rest (*i.e.* as to the meaning of בר). So Aben Ezra considered, who in his note on this passage says, ומה בר בשני, מה ברי, רמז, ופי', and the meaning points to, 'what my son, and what the son of my womb ?' Hence, בר is the ordinary Chaldee word for *son*, and is equivalent to בן." Kimchi, although he gives a preference to this interpretation, has mentioned two others, which do not appear satisfactory. The one by taking בר to signify *pure*, as לברי לבב *to the pure in heart*, Ps. lxxiii. 1 : the other by assigning to it the meaning of *chosen, elect :* and he quotes 1 Sam. xvii. 8. ברר לכם איש, "*choose* for you a man" *

* Dr Phillips also says, "in the ancient book Zohar there is a passage which shows in what sense the author understood the intention of this Psalm, and of this verse in particular. It is as follows : (then follows the passage, translated thus)—'*Thou art the Son* (בר), *the faithful shepherd, of thee it is said, "Kiss the Son* (בר)*" ; and thou art the Lord of Israel, master below, the Lord of ministering angels, Son* (בר) *above, Son of the Holy One, blessed be he, and the Shechinah.*' (Lubbi edition, fol. 87)."

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The extraordinary translation of the Sept. δραξασθε παιδειας, followed by the Vulgate, *apprehendite disciplinam*, and of the Chaldee קבילו אולפנא must be regarded as altogether unauthorized. We might expect that the Chaldee form, בר, would be employed in the passage before us, because the address is to Gentiles, and therefore the word used by them to express "son" would be adopted.

And ye perish in the way.] "Understand ב before דרך and ye perish in the way, *i.e.* the way of error which ye have chosen. Rashi and Kimchi take it in this manner and refer to Ps. i. 6." (*Phillips.*) For כמעט in the sense of *suddenly*, see Job xxxii. 22. This shows that in the millennial government of Christ, judgment will speedily be exercised upon obdurate evil. It is otherwise now when the Lord is as one who hath retired into His place, and evil is allowed to prosper. At present, they who direct the earth's energies go on in the way of their own thoughts, and are not suddenly cut off therein. But it shall not be so when the Lord alone shall be exalted.

Happy are all they who put their trust in him.] I have already observed that there will be some who will do homage outwardly and render a feigned obedience (*see* Ps. xviii. 44), but who will not really put their trust in Him. They only who are trusters in Him (observe the abstract use of the participle) are pronounced "happy."—אשרי כל־חוסי בו.

There are *three* words used in the Old Testament to denote the state of trusting or confiding in another. *First*, האמן the Hiphil of אמן: *secondly*, חסה: *thirdly*, בטח. These words, though cognate in signification, are not used indifferently.

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The first, האמן, which is frequently followed by the preposition ב as in Genesis xv. 6; or by ל, as in Exodus iv. 8, is in our version commonly rendered, "believe in," or "believe," and answers to πιστευω επι, εις, or εν, or πιστευω simply, in the Greek Testament.

Whenever האמן is used, the thought intended to be made prominent is the truthfulness, and consequently the credibility of the person, who, by his proposal or promise, invites my confidence. I *trust* in him because I *believe* him. Accordingly, the Septuagint, even when translating האמן followed by ב, use, commonly, πιστευω alone, and seldom πιστευω εν: hereby indicating that the trust *in* another which is always implied by האמן and πιστευω* is founded on *the believing* him. The veracity of the person is the ground on which we trust in him—the subject about which we trust in him being determined by the proposal or promise through which such trust is invited or claimed.

The first place, in the Old Testament, in which this word occurs is Gen. xv. 6, and affords a sufficient illustration of its general use. "And He (the Lord) said unto him (Abraham) so shall thy seed be: and he *believed in* (האמן ב) the Lord, *etc.*" Our translators following the Hebrew literally, render "*believed in*," whilst in the Septuagint and in Romans iv. 3, we find επιστευσε only. "Abraham believed God." But it is evident that "believed" so used, must involve the notion of "confide *in*" or "trust *in*;" for if I believe a person *who makes a promise to me*, I necessarily *trust in* him for the fulfilment of that promise. Accordingly, in the very next

* Except when indicating the mere recognition of a fact, without any reference to a promise, or to any proposal inviting confidence, as in James ii. 19.

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verse but one in the Romans, we find "to believe on" used as an equivalent expression to "to believe"—*τῳ δε μη εργαζομενῳ, πιστευοντι δε επι, etc.*

It is sufficient, therefore, to say that whenever האמן occurs as denoting our relation to God, it implies that some definite proposal inviting our confidence has been made to us by God: —that proposal, if we receive it, we receive because we *believe* God, and so believing God, we necessarily trust in God. Consequently, האמן and *πιστευω* thus used must always imply confidence or trust, grounded on belief.

But whilst האמן thus fixes the attention on the character and truthfulness of the person whose word we trust, חסה is used when we trust to another for protection and refuge in the hour of difficulty or danger, and when it is especially intended to fix attention on the *fact* of our so trusting: whereas, בטח, which is equally connected with circumstances of difficulty and danger, directs attention, not so much to *the fact* of trusting, as to *the manner* of the trusting, as being peaceful and firm, and attended, as a result, by a consciousness of security and strength. This may be especially seen in the use of the adverbial form בטח, *confidently, truthfully;* but commonly in our version translated "safely," or "in safety," as Lev. xxvi. 5—"dwell in your land safely;" and Lev. xxv. 18, "dwell in the land *in safety*;" or else "careless," Judges xviii. 7; "with confidence," Ezek. xxviii. 26; "securely," Mic. ii. 8. See also the following passages in which the verb is used. "In God, I will praise His word, in God I *have confided*" (בטחתי), Ps. lvi. 4. And Ps. xxxiii. 21, "Our heart shall rejoice in Him; because we *have confided* (בטחנו) in His holy name." Accordingly, the Sept. renders this word either by *ελπιζω* or *επελπιζω*

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in the sense of confident expectation, or else by θαρρεω, πεποιθως ειμι, and in the participle by ασφαλεια in Prov. xi. 15—all words implying *confidence* and *sense of* security.

In חסה, on the contrary, (its primary meaning being "to flee for refuge" to another; see *Gesenius*) a sense of weakness and danger, and of the necessity of making another our refuge, predominates. The two words are found in connexion in Ps. cxviii,. 8, 9, which verses may be *paraphrased* thus: "It is good to be weak and trust for refuge (חסה) in Jehovah, rather than to be strong because we put confidence (בטח) in man. It is better to be weak and trust for refuge (חסה) to Jehovah, rather than to be strong because we put confidence in (בטח) princes." As a general rule, therefore, we may say that האמן and ב האמן should be translated, "believe" and "believe in": חסה "to put trust in:" בטח "to confide," in the sense of trusting *confidently*. In the verse before us we have חסה—"Happy are all they that put their trust in Him," that is, who in their weakness find in Him their refuge.

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NOTES ON PSALM LXVIII.

To Him that presideth. A Psalm of David—a song.

VERSES 1, 2, 3.

1 God shall arise, His enemies shall be scattered;
And they that hate Him shall flee from before His face:

2 As the driving away of smoke, so Thou shalt drive them away;
As the melting of wax before the fire,
So the wicked shall perish from before the face of God:

3 But the righteous shall be glad, they shall exult before God,
Yea, they shall rejoice with exceeding joy.

God shall arise, etc.] This Psalm belongs to that yet future hour when "the transgressors having come to the full," God shall at last rend the veil from the heart of Israel; forgive them; deliver them from their enemies; re-gather those of them that are scattered; lead part of them in triumph through the wilderness; establish His glory on Zion, His holy mountain; and re-occupy His sanctuary in Jerusalem.

In these and like parts of Scripture the Prophet, carried onward in prophetic vision into the distant future, describes briefly and rapidly the objects that are successively presented to his view. Hence the abruptness of

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many of the utterances, and the quickness of transition. The scope of the Psalm is comprehensive. Commencing from the period when God will arise to deliver Israel, it concludes with a reference to the final establishment of His glory in Zion, and His worship as the God of the whole earth in Jerusalem.

The last deed of daring that human wickedness will, *in this dispensation*, attempt, is, the formation of a mighty confederacy against Israel, with the view of utterly extinguishing them and blotting out their name. "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance." See the whole of Psalm lxxxiii. How nearly Israel will be crushed may be seen from Joel ii. But "the Lord shall judge His people, and repent Himself for His servants, when He seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left" (*See* Deut. xxxii. 36). So also Psalm cxxiv. "If it had not been Jehovah who was on our side, now may Israel say; if it had not been Jehovah who was on our side, when men rose up against us: then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us. Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be Jehovah who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth." These words need no comment. They evidently belong to the time when God will place Himself "on the side" of Israel, when He will "render vengeance to His adversaries," and will be "merciful to His land and to His people."

The ancient cry of Israel when the Ark of the Covenant moved at their head was, "Arise, O Jehovah, and thine enemies shall be scattered, and they that hate thee shall flee before thee" (Num. x. 35). This cry will once more be heard at the period to which the commencing

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verse of the Psalm we are now considering belongs; for then He whom the Ark typified—the Messiah of Israel, will have placed Himself at their head, so that "he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them." Never more "from that day and onwards," will these words of triumphant strength be taken from the lips of Israel. The occasions on which they will be uttered and responded to will be various, for the enemies of Israel, after Israel have been taken under the protection of their heavenly King, will be many. Even after the destruction of the mighty hosts that Antichrist will lead from Armageddon into the valley of Jehoshaphat (*see* Joel iii.), many foes of Israel will remain; just as of old Amalek and Moab, Ammon and many others, remained after the overthrow of Pharaoh in the Red Sea. Yet, however numerous the foes that may resist or assail *forgiven* Israel, they shall never be permitted to triumph over them even for a moment. After Israel have been caused "to look on Him whom they have pierced," they shall ever be known as the people whom Jehovah protects and whom Jehovah blesses. The *last* great confederacy against Israel will be in the next dispensation, at the close of the Millennium, when Satan, loosed out of his prison, shall again deceive the nations, and gather them together from the four quarters of the earth against "the citadel (*την παρεμβολην*) of the saints" on Zion, and against Jerusalem "the beloved city." See Rev. xx. 9. An earlier, and somewhat similar gathering of the same nations against Israel, is described in Ezekiel xxxviii.; but *this* takes place not at the close, but at the commencement of the Millennium, and before the full development of Israel's millennial blessing is attained.

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The gathering described in Ezekiel is, therefore, to be carefully distinguished from that referred to in Rev. xx. Both utterly fail. Israel, without an effort on their part, are defended and triumph, for "God is with them."

As the driving away of smoke, etc.] These words will find their first and great fulfilment in the destruction of those mighty hosts which, gathered at Armageddon (Rev. xvi. 16), will thence march on Jerusalem (Is. x. 28-32), and entering the valley of Jehoshaphat will there be trodden as in the winepress (*see* Joel iii. 9-13 and Rev. xiv. 20). The suddenness and completeness of their destruction is often referred to in Scripture. "As a snail that melteth, let every one of them pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun. Before your pots can feel the thorns, He shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living and in His wrath" (Ps. lviii. 8). Luther comments on the force of these two emblems, smoke and wax. "The smoke disappears before the wind: the wax before the fire. It is most contemptuous to compare to smoke and wax such mighty enemies who think that they can combat heaven and earth."

But the righteous shall rejoice, etc.] The servants of God shall no longer have to say as now that "he who departeth from evil maketh himself a prey"—that "Truth falleth in the streets, and equity cannot enter." On the contrary, righteousness, blessed and prospered from on high, shall then flourish in the earth. Compare the conclusion of the song of Deborah, whose victory foreshadowed this future triumph of Israel's King. "So shall all thine enemies perish, O Jehovah; and they that love Him shall be as the going forth of the sun in his might" (Judges v. 31).

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VERSE 4

4 Sing unto God, sing psalms unto His name;
Cast up a highway for Him who rideth in the deserts*
In the power of Jah His name; and exult before Him.

Who rideth in the deserts, etc.] The desert and the wilderness, especially those deserts and wildernesses that begirt the Land of Immanuel, will be peculiarly the sphere where the mighty power of the God of Israel will be displayed when the Lord sets to His hand the second time to recover Israel; of whom, however, only a remnant shall be spared (*See* Is. x. 20-22). Of those of Israel left in their Land "a third part" only will be spared (Zech. xiii. 8, 9). Others scattered in distant lands will be slowly gathered "one by one" (Is. xxvii. 12.) Others will be brought by repentant Gentile nations as an offering to Jehovah. See Is. xviii. 7 and Zeph. iii. 10, translating the latter passage thus: "From beyond the rivers of Cush (the Nile and Euphrates) they (the nations) shall bring as an offering to Me, My suppliants the daughter of My dispersed." But a fourth division of Israel will be brought by the Lord into the wilderness, as of old, there to be disciplined, proved, and finally led (the Lord being at their head) triumphantly to Zion. "Arise, O Jehovah, into Thy rest; Thou and the ark of Thy strength. Let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let Thy saints shout for joy. . . .

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* בערבות—This word, derived probably from ערב, *to be arid, sterile*, is continually applied to the plains or steppes that abound in and around Palestine, and is sometimes translated "plains," sometimes "deserts." Compare Is. xl. 3. "In *the desert* make straight a highway for our God." See, also, Isaiah lvii. 14. ("Cast ye up, cast ye up the way" סלו, סלו) as referred to in Notes on Ps. lxxxiv. 5 on Page 149.

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For Jehovah hath chosen Zion ; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is my rest for ever : here will I dwell ; for I have desired it " (Ps. cxxxii. 8, 14).

This second progress of Israel through the wilderness to the Land of their rest and glory—from Sinai to Zion, is one of the chief subjects of the Psalm before us, and is referred to in many other parts of Scripture. " I will bring you out from among the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant " (Ez. xx. 34-37). " Behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope : and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt " (Hosea ii. 14). "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things. The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might : they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth : they shall be afraid of Jehovah our God, and shall fear because of thee " (Micah vii. 15-17). "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them (Israel) ; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. . . . In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert " (Is. xxxv. 1). " And the

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Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea (the Gulf of Suez) ; and with His mighty wind shall He shake His hand over the river (Euphrates), and shall smite it into seven streams, and make men go over dry-shod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria ; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt " (Is. xi. 15, 16). " I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys : I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree ; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together : that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it " (Is. xli. 18-20). Such is the character of that coming hour to which the Psalm before us belongs. Marvellous was the march of Israel through the wilderness of old ; but more marvellous and more blessed will be that which is yet to be. " Ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight ; for Jehovah will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rereward " (Is. lii. 12). This Psalm is one of the evidences that Israel will then have " seen, and known, and considered, and understood together " what God hath wrought. They will be ready to extol Him " that rideth forward in the deserts in the power of Jah His name," *i.e.* in the strength and potency of His own great name, and will say, "Cast ye up a highway *etc.* " ; that is, let His course be established, and prospered, and triumph.

VERSES 5, 6

5 **A father of orphans, and a judge of widows**
Is God in the habitation of his holiness :

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6 God is he that causeth the solitary to dwell in a home;
That causeth the prisoners to come forth into prosperity;
Only the rebellious dwell in a land of drought.

A father of orphans, etc.] In the midst of the great and awful displays of almighty power that will introduce the Millennium, and cause "the earth to tremble and be still," the goodness and graciousness of God will not be forgotten. Forgiven Israel will in a peculiar manner prove His *lovingkindness*, for they will greatly need it. Orphanhood, widowhood, solitariness, destitution, oppression—in a word, every form of calamity and of sorrow will, before the hour of their deliverance comes, have stamped upon Israel an aspect of woe the like to which has never been seen "from the beginning of the creation that God created, unto that time; neither shall be." Having loved and followed after strangers, from them they shall receive their portion. Under Antichrist—"the idol shepherd," that is to be raised up for them in the Land of Israel (*see* Zech. xi. 16), they will be "trampled down like the mire of the streets" (Is. x. 6). "The Lord also was as an enemy: He hath swallowed up Israel, He hath swallowed up all her palaces: He hath destroyed his strong holds, and hath increased in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation." See Book of Lamentations throughout. But when the time arrives for the Psalm before us to be accomplished, the hour will have come for Zion to be comforted. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem" (Is. lxvi. 13). Israel will have gone "through fire and through water"; but they will be "brought out into a wealthy place" (Ps. lxvi. 12). "The people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice

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of thy cry: when He shall hear it, He will answer thee" (Is. xxx. 19). Nor will the mercies and lovingkindnesses of the Jehovah of Israel be restricted to Israel. In Zion a feast of fat things shall be made for "all peoples" (Is. xxv. 6). Even Edom, deep as it shall be made to drink the dregs of the cup of the Lord's fury, yet even in Edom a remnant shall be spared. "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in ME," are words addressed to Edom (Jer. xlix. 11). Well therefore may it be said in that day, "A father of orphans, and a judge of widows is God in His holy habitation." The results of His being this will be manifested throughout the whole earth.

VERSES 7, 8

7 O God, at Thy going forth before Thy people,
At Thy marching in the desert; Selah.

8 The earth trembled, yea the heavens dropped, at the presence of God;
This Sinai, at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

O God, at thy going forth, etc.] Although I would not deny that this, and similar passages in the Psalms and in the Prophets, may be understood as referring to the past manifestations of the Divine glory at Sinai, when Israel was first brought out of Egypt; yet I regard the past manifestation to be a foreshadowing of that which is yet to be, and to have supplied only a partial fulfilment as respects the occurrences and results mentioned. Past tenses are used; but this is in accordance with the general rule which causes events yet unfulfilled to be spoken of as accomplished, because God is able to call the "things that are not as though they were." "Yet have I inaugurated My King upon My holy hill of Zion"

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and "Whom He justified, them He also glorified"—are examples. We exclude not the past, but we include the future, when the glory of Him who once manifested Himself on Sinai will re-enter Sinai's wilderness and through it pass to Zion. The march of Him whom the Ark of the Covenant typified, through the wilderness and through enemies from Sinai to Zion, and the establishment of His glory there, and the results thereof:—these things I regard as the subject of the Psalm before us. Then the typical acts of David and of Solomon, when the one brought up the Ark to the Citadel of Zion (*see* 1 Chron. xv. and xvi.), and the other to the Temple (*see* 2 Chron. v.), will receive their full accomplishment, and it shall be once more said amidst the rejoicing of Heaven and of earth, "Arise, O Jehovah into Thy resting place, Thou and the ark of Thy strength;" and then again shall Israel "bow themselves, and worship, and praise," saying, in a manner in which they have never yet said, "Praise Jehovah, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever."

The verse we are considering places us in the wilderness. We stand as with Sinai before us. Hence the words, "this Sinai," or "yon Sinai." We see Sinai tremble, and the earth likewise, at the presence of One who chooses not Sinai for the place of His rest, nor Bashan, nor Lebanon, but Zion. The last chapter of Habakkuk may be regarded as extending over and comprehending the period described in the verses before us. "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. . . . He stood, and measured the earth: He beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: His ways are everlasting."

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Habakkuk, however, directs our minds chiefly to the effect of the manifestation of the glory on the nations and the earth generally, on whom it will bear terrifically and destructively; whereas the Psalm describes its relation to forgiven Israel, which will be one of protection, strength, and blessing. Israel will behold Sinai, and Bashan, and the nations, and the whole earth trembling at the presence of a glory which will be the glory of their God and King, moving at their head until it finds its resting-place on Zion. It will be the hour when the cherubic power which once watched over Israel, but which was grieved away by their iniquities (*see* Ez. xi. 22), will return in everlasting blessing (*see* Ez. xliii.)—the risen saints being entrusted with its exercise. See "Thoughts on the Apocalypse" as advertised at end.

VERSES 9, 10

9 **A shower of freenesses thou wilt dispense, O God;**
Thine inheritance (and it was weary) thou hast established.

10 **Thy congregation have taken up their dwelling-place therein;**
Thou wilt establish [it] in thy goodness for the afflicted, O God.

A shower of freenesses, etc.] A shower of blessings, or gifts, freely given. "Pluviam munificentiarum aut liberalitatum." God will then in the abounding riches of His goodness pour forth showers of abounding blessings on His forgiven people. The Land of Israel—Immanuel's Land, found by Him worn out and wearied with affliction, will be by Him established. His congregation, formed of those who will be preserved, quickened and sustained in life by Him, will take up their abode therein, and find a quiet habitation and sure

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dwelling places. It will be the compensating gift of His goodness to those who will just before have said, "Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt. Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those who are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud." See Psalms cxxiii. and cxxiv.

VERSE 11

11 The Lord (Adonai) will give the word;
They [feminine pronoun] who bear the tidings are a mighty host.

The Lord will give, etc.] That is, the Lord will cause the tidings of Zion's rescue and blessing to be proclaimed throughout all the earth. Compare Is. lxii. 11. "Behold, Jehovah hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation is come (בּא); behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." And Is. xiv. 32, "What shall one then answer the messengers of *the nation*?"—that is, the messengers sent by those of Israel who are in distant parts of the earth, to enquire respecting the result of the great day of visitation to their Land. The reply shall be, "That Jehovah hath founded Zion, and the poor of His people shall trust in it." In the verse before us the daughters of Jerusalem, like Miriam of old (Exodus xv. 20), are described as going forth to aid in the proclamation of the joyful tidings. They are again referred to in the twenty-fifth verse—"Among them were the damsels playing with the timbrels." This accounts for the use of the feminine pronoun in the passage before us.

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VERSES 12, 13

12 Kings of armies shall flee, shall flee;
And she that tarried at home shall divide the spoil.

13 When ye shall have lain down among the ranges,
Ye shall be as the wings of a dove
Covered with silver
And her feathers with brightness of fine gold.

Kings of armies, etc.] Here we revert (and this is usual in prophecy) to circumstances that precede the deliverance described in the previous verses. The Prophet speaks as if beholding before him the mighty hosts that are to gather against Jerusalem, and then pronounces the sentence of their overthrow. "They shall flee, they shall flee," and Israel, even though helpless and inexertive, shall triumph and divide the spoil. Compare 1 Sam. xxx. 21-24.

*Among the ranges.**] The word here translated "ranges" is found in a passage in Ezekiel, where it evidently means the hooks on which the sacrifices were suspended previous to their being burnt on the altar. See Ezek. xl. 43. "And within were HOOKS a hand broad, fastened round about: and upon the tables the flesh of the offering." I have adopted the word "ranges" as an expression best suited to denote the place devoted to the preparation of the sacrifices. Our minds are thus directed to a scene described in Gen. xv., where Abraham is said to have lain down amidst divided sacrifices prepared for offering, and to have slept in their midst.

* [In preparing the Notes on this Psalm for re-printing, the author gave instructions that it should be stated that the substance of the exposition of this clause is taken from Keble's letter to Sir John Coleridge which will be found on page 523 of "A Memoir of the Rev. John Keble," 1869.]

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When Israel shall have been brought into that relation to SACRIFICE in which Abraham placed himself, the time for their blessing will have come. Then all defilements shall be removed; and they shall be as a dove covered with silver and fine gold.

VERSE 14

14 When the Almighty scattereth kings in it [the Land]
It shall be as snow in Zalmon.

It shall be as snow, etc.] Snow, seen in contrast with a dark mountain, seems bright with whiteness. Such shall be the aspect of Israel's Land when placed under the efficacy of Sacrifice, and recognized as the Land of Immanuel. The discomfiture and flight of the kings gathered against Israel are again and again referred to in the Psalms. See, especially, Ps. xlviii. 4.

VERSES 15, 16

15 A mighty mountain is the mountain of Bashan,
A mountain of heights is the mountain of Bashan.

16 Why do ye watch enviously, ye mountains of heights
[Behold] the mountain desired of God to inhabit;
Yea, Jehovah shall dwell there for ever.

A mighty mountain, etc.] Literally, a mountain of God; an expression indicative of exceeding greatness. See Jonah iii. 3, where Nineveh is called "an exceeding great city," literally, "a city great unto God." Compare *αστειος τῳ θεῳ* Acts vii. 20. The frequent allusions to the fir trees of Bashan, the oaks of Bashan, the bulls of Bashan, sufficiently mark the vigour, sturdiness, and insolence of strength that Bashan symbolizes. Bashan, therefore, stands in Scripture as one of the

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chief emblems of that proud Gentile power which dominates over the earth during the time of Israel's abasement, and looks down contemptuously on Zion. It is in fact a vast mountain range of basaltic formation, standing in very marked contrast with the comparatively insignificant hills of Central Palestine. Yet Zion, the mountain of the God of Israel, is to be exalted, the Gentile Bashan to be abased.

Why do ye watch enviously, etc.] It is difficult to determine the precise meaning of רצד which is only used in this place. The Sept. renders it by ὑπολαμβανετε —Aquila, εριζετε—Symmachus, περισπουδαζετε—Jerome, *contenditis*—Horsley, "Why are ye upon the watch, ye high hills? What would ye contend for?"—Gesenius, "to observe insidiously." The word does not appear to denote contention or rivalry (the time for *that* will have passed), but rather anxious and expectant observancy of the result of the Divine actings in awarding to each their portion. All will be conscious that the time is come to abase that which had been high, and to lift up that which had been low.

This is the mountain, or, See the mountain desired of God, etc.] Compare Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14. "For Jehovah hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it." See also Ps. lxxxvii. 2, 5.

VERSE 17

17 The chariots of God are twice ten thousand,
Thousands on thousands repeated;
The Lord is among them—Sinai is in the holy place.

The Lord [Adonai] is among them, etc.] Some translate this verse, "The Lord among them" (*i.e.* in the midst

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of the chariots of His strength) "hath come from Sinai into the sanctuary." But this is a paraphrase, not a translation. It is better to render the clause strictly, and to retain the abruptness. The glory once manifested at Sinai is seen in vision to move through the wilderness to Zion, the mountain of holiness and grace. Sinai, therefore, is regarded as moving to Zion. It is the same glory, the same holiness, but it removes from Sinai, and finds its dwelling place on Zion. Believers, by faith, recognize the now near approach of its collocation there; but Israel and the earth generally, have persisted in ignoring the grace of Zion and all its resulting blessings: they stand before the thunders and lightnings of Sinai (*see* Rev. xi. 19), which will finally break forth upon them in all their devouring power, when none shall be spared, except a remnant. When the time comes for this Psalm to be fulfilled, Israel will well understand what it means for God's relation to them to be changed from Sinai to Zion.

VERSE 18

18 Thou didst ascend unto the height;
Thou didst lead captive captivity;
Thou didst receive gifts to be in man;
Yea, even the rebellious shall be for Jah, God, to dwell in.

Thou didst ascend, etc.] This verse looks back to a period far anterior to that to which the preceding verses refer. The Messiah and God of Israel, long previous to that yet future display of His glory on Zion which the preceding verses describe, had also (even at a time when Israel acknowledged Him not) effected that wondrous work which the verse before us sets forth. He had ascended up to the height, even high above all Heavens

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(and in order to do this He must first have descended); and when He so ascended, He burst the bars of Hades, and took with Him the souls of His departed saints into the Paradise of God, and so captive led captivity; and He likewise received from His Father gifts that were to find the place of their collocation and settlement, not in Israel merely, but in MAN (באדם), so that not only in Israel, but among the distant Gentiles, men found in the place of rebellion and revolt were sought after and made through faith the "temples of God"—persons "for Jehovah to dwell in." All this had been accomplished at the ascension into glory of the Messiah of Israel, whilst Israel's eyes were yet blinded; and thus the Apostle quotes this verse in the fourth of the Ephesians.

It was fitting that in the midst of a Psalm devoted for the most part to the day of Israel's gladness, reference should be made to that previous triumph of their King over sin and death to which their deliverance, and triumph, and glory will be due. Unless He had first descended, died, and risen, wrath would have been their portion. Those whom He released from Hades, and whose spirits are now with Him in Paradise will, when the hour of Zion's glory comes, be re-united with their bodies, glorified according to the glory of their Lord, and will surround Him on Zion and give to Zion one of its most characteristic glories; for the "Church of the First-born ones" will be present there.

Unto the height.] The word translated "the height" or "the high place" (המרום) sometimes denotes the seat of God's earthly government, whence He will rule Israel and the earth, when the hour of Israel's forgiveness shall have come. It is thus used in Ps. vii. where God is entreated to return to the high-place of Israel,

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as to a place which He had left. "Arise, O Jehovah, in thine anger; lift up Thyself because of the rage of mine oppressors: and awake for me the judgment which Thou hast commanded. So shall the congregation of the peoples compass Thee about: for their sakes therefore RETURN THOU to the high-place." See also Psalm xciii. where God is described as having returned to the high-place of Israel and there reigning.

In the verse before us, however, a different sense attaches to the word המרום, for there is another "high-place" higher than the "high-place" of Israel. In the quotation of this passage in Eph. iv. the Apostle interprets this word as meaning in the present passage, that place of exalted glory into which Christ hath already ascended, high above all heavens—a place of exaltation far higher than that high-place of Israel to which in due time He will return and ALSO occupy, without resigning the place of His glory above the Heavens.

We must therefore translate the connected words, not as in our version, "thou *hast* ascended," as if they referred to an event just accomplished, but "thou *didst* ascend," in the aoristic sense—the action referred to being one that had long passed. In the preceding verses the Prophet had spoken as if standing in the presence of that glory which will be revealed on Zion, when the Lord surrounded by heavenly hosts shall be there, after He shall have returned to the high-place of Israel. After describing this glory as present, the Psalmist refers to another event (to him future, to *us* past) and addressing Him whose glory is seen on Zion, speaks of that first and higher exaltation into which the Holy One of Israel entered when He brake the bands of death and ascended up high above all Heavens, taking with Him into the

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Paradise of God the souls of the redeemed, for whom He burst the gates of Hades; when also He received from the Father, and dispensed to His people on earth (whether Jew or whether Gentile), those gifts of ministry whereby His people are built up in the Truth. And, as the ascension of the rejected Messiah of Israel into His heavenly glory was thus marked by His leading "captivity captive," and receiving gifts for men; so His return to the high-place of Israel shall be marked by His recapturing captive Israel, and by His dispensing those gifts which shall be the result of the outpouring of the Spirit in the latter day (*see* Ps. xviii. and Ps. cxxiv.). In both cases it is a day of like grace; forgiving, reclaiming, and blessing the rebellious, so as for Jehovah to dwell among them.

Thou didst receive gifts for man, etc.] "Man" is here used in a collective sense, denoting men generally, and indicating that the gifts spoken of were not received for Israel only, but for men—Gentiles as well as Jews—another reason why the Apostle should quote this verse as corroborative of his teaching to the Ephesians.

"Gifts *for* men" is the best rendering of מתנות באדם —gifts that are *for* and to be *in* men. See Gesenius on the force of ב, as including the signification of אל *to* or *for*, but also "signifying the reaching the end and remaining at it." When a person receives gifts *for others*, he must receive with a view to *giving*, so that there is nothing expressed in the words of the Apostle "*gave gifts*" (εδωκε δοματα ανθρωποις) that is not necessarily included in the words, "received gifts for man." The Apostles in quoting from the Old Testament, often develop meanings which are necessarily involved in the passages quoted, though they may not be formally expressed in words. All the comments of the

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Apostles on Old Testament texts, whether in the way of interpretation or of application, are of course authoritative, because they wrote by inspiration.

I need not say that "man" as here used, indicates not unbelieving men, but those who are through grace brought into the family of faith.

VERSES 19, 20, 21

19 **Blessed be the Lord [Adonai] !**
Day by day [with blessings] he loadeth us [future, He continueth to load us]—
The God of our salvations. [the plural expressing completeness] Selah.

20 **God is to us the God of salvation,**
And to Jehovah, the Lord, belong the goings to death.

21 **But God will wound the head of his enemies,**
The hairy scalp that goeth on still in its guiltiness.

God is to us, etc.] The relation of God to reconciled Israel is forcibly contrasted in these verses with His relation to obdurate enemies. The commencement of the Millennium, like the commencement of Solomon's reign, will be marked by judgment on adversaries. Indeed, the very object for which the Lord assumes His millennial power, is that He may subdue all enemies. "He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet." The Millennium, therefore, is not a perfect nor the final dispensation. It leads on to the dispensation of the fulness of times where all will be perfect and according to God. "We according to His promise look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." This will be as true in the Millennium as now.

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The goings unto [or that have relation unto] *death*—למות תוצאות, that is, the paths that lead unto death. Phillips and others have observed that the English version of these words "issues from death," cannot be sustained by the Hebrew; for ל has never the force of *from*. The clause, however, must not be understood as if antithetical to the first clause of the same verse, and speaking of judgments on the enemies of Israel. The antithesis evidently does not begin until the next verse, and is introduced by the word "*but*" or "only" (אך). Israel had been brought by oppressive affliction and judgment close to the very gates of death: but unto God pertained the control of the "goings unto death," as of all things, and He delivered them.

VERSES 22, 23

22 **The Lord said,**
From Bashan I will bring again,
I will bring again from the depths of the sea:

23 **That thou mayst plunge thy foot in blood;**
As to the tongue of thy dogs, from the enemies shall be its portion.

From Bashan, etc.] The future triumphant march of Israel from Assyria, and from Egypt, is described in these verses, when they will be used as "the battle-axe and weapons of war" of Jehovah against His and their enemies. Compare Is. xi. 11 to end. "They shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab, and the children of Ammon shall obey them." See also Micah v. 8 and ii. 12. Israel being thus used *first* for judgment on the

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nations, moves, as it were, through a sea of blood. The word I have translated "plunge" means literally, to pierce or to wound. A bloody foot has the appearance of a wounded foot; hence the metaphor.

VERSES 24, 25, 26

24 They have seen thy goings O God,
The goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.
25 The singers went before,
The players on instruments after;
In the midst were the virgins, playing on timbrels.
26 In the congregations, bless ye God the Lord,
Ye who are of the fountain of Israel.

The goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary]. The scene described in these verses was foreshadowed in 2 Chron. v. 6, where the Ark was brought by Solomon into *the Temple:* just as the establishment of the Divine glory on Zion referred to in the previous part of this Psalm was foreshadowed by David bringing the Ark to *the Citadel* of David on Zion—the latter being the place of strength and governmental power—the former, *i.e.* the Temple, the place of worship and instruction in Truth. When the glory of the Lord chooseth Zion for its resting place (*see* verse 16), Bashan and the proud Gentile mountains tremble and are still: when His goings are seen as He entereth His sanctuary, Israel His people rejoice, and, in congregated worship, bless Him.

VERSE 27

27 There is Benjamin, the little one, their subduer;
The princes of Judah their minister of judgment;
The princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali.

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Their subduer.] From רדה, applied generally to power that encounters resistance and is put forth in order to subdue enemies. This character of power against God's enemies will be especially exercised by *Benjamin*—the least of the tribes, and therefore the more suited to show forth the glorious power of Him from whom its strength cometh. There is some difficulty in determining the translation of רגמה applied to Judah. It is no doubt derived from רגם to stone, to destroy by stoning *as a judicial penalty*. Hence רגמה means "obrutio, lapidatio, interitus." As here used, I understand it to ascribe to Judah the power of inflicting righteous *judicial* penalties, just as to Benjamin is ascribed the power of conquest and subjugation on behalf of Israel. Both characters of power need to be exercised against that mighty strength of evil which David longed to subdue, but could not. The earth will teem with evil when the reign of the Messiah of Israel begins. See the dying words of David respecting the sons of Belial. There must be power to subdue, and power to rule also. Both will be found in Israel.

VERSES 28, 29

28 Thy God hath commanded thy strength:
Strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.

29 Because of thy temple which is over Jerusalem,
Shall kings bring a gift unto Thee.

Thy God hath commanded, etc.] Israel will be very sensible then whence their strength cometh. They will have learned to say, "Lord, Thou wilt ordain peace for us; for Thou also hast wrought all our works for us." (לנו) that is, with reference to our good. See Is. xxvi. 12—a chapter which may be read throughout as harmonizing with this Psalm.

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Because of thy Temple, etc.] Δια τον ναον σου. *Symmachus.* The prefix מ is often used, as it is here, to indicate the source whence influence or operative power emanates. From the Temple of Jehovah shall go forth the influence that shall constrain the subjection of the earth and all its kings. There is no reason, therefore, for altering, as some do, the position of these words and subjoining them to the previous clause. The word translated gift, or present, (שי) is used twice elsewhere, but always in the singular, viz., Ps. lxxvi. 11. "Bring a gift unto Him that ought to be feared;" and Is. xviii. 7. "At that time shall be brought a present to Jehovah of hosts" etc. This word seems to indicate not so much a multiplicity or continuance of offerings, as a gift specifically presented in token of submission to the One great Ruler of earth. The words על־ירושלים may be understood to denote the relation of the Temple to Jerusalem, as exalted above it, and protective of it.

VERSE 30

30 **Rebuke the beast of the reed,**
The herd of bulls with the young-bullocks of the peoples,
[Behold each one] submitting itself with pieces of silver:
He hath scattered the nations that in wars delight.

Rebuke, etc.] גער not necessarily meaning rebuke unto destruction, but unto correction. See Gen. xxxvii. 10 and Ruth ii. 16. The nations rebuked are described as submitting themselves one by one. *The beast of the reed* evidently denotes Egypt or its head. Egypt is throughout the Prophets referred to as being visited with judgments of peculiar severity at that period.

Bulls.] As the language of this passage is clearly

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figurative, it is best to translate אבירים *bulls*, a meaning which it bears in Is. xxxiv. 7.

Young bullocks.] We read in Jer. xlvi. 20, "Egypt is like a very fair *heifer*, but destruction cometh; it cometh out of the north. Also her hired men in the midst of her are like *calves* of the stall." See also Jer. xxxi. 18. "*A calf* unaccustomed to the yoke."

Submitting itself.] Some alter the received reading, and translate—"Trampling down them that delight in silver," and so referring מתרפס (Hithp. part) to God. The meaning would be satisfactory, but there is not sufficient authority for the change of reading.

VERSE 31

31 Princes shall come out of Egypt;
Cush shall stretch out his hands unto God.

Out of Egypt.] Egypt, though it is to be terribly smitten, shall finally be healed. "The Lord shall smite Egypt; He shall smite and heal it; and they shall return unto the Lord, and He shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them. In that day, there shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the earth: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel mine inheritance" (Is. xix. 22). The meaning of חשמנים *Chashmannim* is uncertain. It is supposed by many to be identical with משמנים, *fat ones, great men, princes*, as used in Ps. lxxviii. 31. The Sept. translates it "*ambassadors*"; others, "*princes*" or "*nobles*";

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others take it be a proper noun. Whichever interpretation be taken, the general meaning of the verse is not affected. It doubtless implies the establishment of happy and friendly intercourse between Egypt and Israel. *Cush* is here the African Cush or Ethiopia; a general name for Africa and its, at present, unpenetrated regions. "Cush shall make his hands run, or hasten, to God," is the literal translation.

VERSES 32, 33, 34

32 Ye kingdoms of the earth, sing ye unto God;
Sing psalms unto the Lord; Selah.

33 To him who rideth on the heaven of heavens which are of old:
Behold, He uttereth forth His voice, a voice of strength;

34 Ascribe ye strength to God;
Over Israel is His excellency [excellent-majesty],
And His strength is in the skies.

Ye kingdoms of the earth, sing ye, etc.] The former clause had given the result of the previously described judgments on the nations, in that they were brought to submit themselves, and own the God of Israel. Here they are called on to rejoice before Him and to worship. His excellent majesty, as regards manifestation in the earth, will be peculiarly "over Israel," but the home of His glory is in the Heavens. "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! who hast set Thy glory *above the heavens*" (Ps. viii.). In the former part of the Psalm, whilst executing judgment on the nations, He is described as riding *in the deserts* in the power of Jah, His name (*see* verse 4): here He is described as riding in the Heaven of Heavens, the home of the excellency of His power being there, and now recognized and submitted to, as there.

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35 Terrible art thou O God out of thy sanctuaries,
The God of Israel:
He it is that giveth strength and power unto THE people.
Blessed be God.

Terrible art thou O God, etc.] The awe of Divine power and glory must be ever felt by man whilst he remains in the flesh. It is only to those "changed into His likeness" that awe gives place to full communion. So it will be to all the redeemed in the new heavens and earth. In the millennial earth, however, there will be some, not in Israel but among the nations, who will render "a feigned obedience" (*See* Ps. xviii. 44, margin); and at the very close there will be a great apostasy, and the terrors of God out of His holy places will be defied—though for the last time. Whilst the possibility of such sin remains it is needful that terror should accompany manifestations of Divine glory. "Out of Thy *sanctuaries*" is an expression that includes the heavenly as well as the earthly seats of His glory. Compare Ps. lxxxiv.; and see remarks on it in succeeding paper.

Unto the people.] העם, or THE nation, הגוי, are titles which Israel are most jealous in appropriating to themselves. Hence, the verse from the application of which they shrink almost more than any other in the Old Testament, is Is. xlix. 7,—"to Him whom THE NATION abhorreth." They see that "Him" must refer to the Messiah of Israel, and they will not allow that "THE nation" is a title that can belong to any except Israel. Here then is a verse that clearly predicts their rejection of their Messiah. But when the time comes for this Psalm to be fulfilled, the veil will be taken from their heart, and they shall be owned "THE PEOPLE whom Jehovah hath blessed." "God shall bless THEM, and then all the ends of the earth shall fear Him." "The Lord hasten it, in His time."

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NOTES ON PSALM LXXXIV.

VERSE 1

1 How beloved [*i.e.*, how dear to me] are thy Tabernacles,
O Jehovah of hosts.

THIS Psalm has been commonly taken as belonging to an Israelite coming from a far distant land to Jerusalem, there to keep the appointed feasts. So far as respects the returning Israelite, the thought is doubtless true; but it is a *prophetic* Psalm, not belonging to the present or any past dispensation, but to the coming age—ἡ οικουμενη ἡ μελλουσα. It is a millennial Psalm, and is to be read as the utterance of a spared and forgiven Israelite, who having heard in some far distant place of exile that the Lord "had founded Zion" (Is. xiv. 32), hastens back to the Land of his fathers, and, as he enters Jerusalem and becomes acquainted with its blessedness and glory, thus expresses his sense of that which God had accomplished for His people.

We must carefully bear in mind that the Millennium is to be a period in which the glory of God will be *manifested.* Jacob's vision, when he saw the Lord standing above the ladder whose foot rested on the earth, but whose top reached unto Heaven, (the vision to which our Lord referred when He said, "Verily, verily, I say

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unto you* ye shall see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man") shall in the Millennium receive its antitypical accomplishment. A ladder is the symbol of *connexion* between two places whose distinctness is preserved. In the Millennium, earth will remain earth, and heaven will remain heaven; but there will be communication between heaven and earth, and that communication will be visible. The foot of the ladder (to adopt the emblem of the vision) may be said to rest on the height of Zion, which will be miraculously exalted high above all the hills that will begirt Jerusalem (*see* Is. ii. and Ps. cxxv.), and is called "the mountain of the house of Jehovah" (*see* Is. ii. 3 and Micah. iv. 1), because it will be the place of Divine authority and governmental power, whence the interests of Truth, represented by the House or Temple of Jehovah, will be watched over and protected. Jerusalem always had in Zion its stronghold or citadel—מצודה. Thus we read in 2 Sam. v. 7, 9, "David took *the stronghold* of Zion, . . . and David dwelt in *the fort:*" and again in 1 Chron. xi. 5, "David took *the castle* of Zion"—the same word מצודה, being used in these three places. In the Acts, the same fortress on Zion is referred to six times (Acts xxi. 34 and 37: xxii. 24: xxiii. 10, 16 and 32,) as *the castle*—παρεμβολη: and the Revelation in describing the close of the millennial period again refers to it as ἡ παρεμβολη των ἁγιων—"the camp or citadel of the saints." Zion, therefore, as being the citadel of the "beloved city," is

* It will be observed that in quoting this passage I omit the word απαρτι, *henceforth*, wrongly rendered, *hereafter* in our version—that word being an interpolation. See *Tregelles in locum.*

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continually spoken of in the Scripture as one of the resting-places of the Divine glory. (*See* Is. xxiv. 23.) It is called, "the place of the name of the Lord of Hosts" (Is. xviii 7): "the mountain of His holiness" (Ps. xlviii. 1): "the joy of the whole earth" (Ps. xlviii. 2): "the perfection of beauty" (Ps. l. 2). In Ps. lxviii. 16, it is described as the mountain which God has chosen for His habitation, and therefore looked on with anxious wonder by Bashan, and other like mountains that had been the seats of ungodly Gentile power.

> "A mighty Mountain is the Mountain of Bashan,
> A Mountain of heights is the Mountain of Bashan;
> Why do ye watch enviously ye Mountains of heights?
> [Behold] the Mountain [Zion] desired of God to inhabit,
> Yea, Jehovah will dwell there for ever.
> The chariots of God are twice-told myriads,
> Thousands and thousands repeated,
> The Lord is among them, etc."

In Revelation xiv. also, Zion is referred to as one of the places in which the glory of the redeemed and of the Lamb is to be displayed in connexion with the earth's future government; and also in Hebrews xii.* "Ye

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* It is important to observe that, although ορει (mountain) is implied in this passage, yet it is not expressed, much less interposed between ψηλαφωμενῳ and και κεκαυμενῳ—the true reading being—ου γαρ προσεληλυθατε ψηλαφωμενῳ και κεκαυμενῳ πυρι—"for ye have not drawn nigh [as ye did at Sinai] to that which is grasped and consumed by fire." Ψηλαφαω means to *handle*, to *grasp*, as fire when it seizes on an object. Or, if we take another meaning of ψηλαφαω, viz., *to grope after*, as when anyone feels after a thing hidden in darkness, we may render, "Ye have not drawn nigh unto that that is groped after [because of being enveloped in darkness] and that is burned with fire etc." So

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have not drawn nigh to a place by fire enveloped [literally, *handled*, grasped] and consumed, nor unto blackness and darkness etc., but ye are come unto Mount Zion etc.: " and then follows the recital of certain glories with which Zion in the coming day of her glory shall be connected—glories manifestly *future*, for Zion is at present desolate (*see* Lamentations), and the Heavenly City as yet existeth not. It is only in the anticipation of faith that we can say that " we are come to Mount Zion, AND to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, AND to myriads of angels, a general assembly, AND to the Church of the first-born ones enrolled in heaven " etc. Mount Zion, having such glories as these

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Wetstein—ψηλαφωμενῳ ορει, " est mons tenebris et fumo obductus qui oculis conspici non poterat, potuisset autem contrectari: at ne hoc quidem concedebatur nisi Mosi soli." This meaning of ψηλαφαω agrees with its use in the Septuagint, where it is used as the translation of משש in Pihel—*to feel in the darkness, to grope.* Deut. xxviii. 29. See *Gesenius.* It is also used in the Sept. as the translation of גשש in Piel, which has the same meaning in Is. lix. 10. " We *grope for* the wall as blind men." Whichever of these meanings of ψηλαφαω be taken, it is certainly not to be translated as if it were synonymous with θιγγανω *to touch*, which is used immediately after; nor can the participle ψηλαφωμενος be translated as if it were the verbal ψηλαφητος. There is, therefore, nothing in this verse, when rightly translated, that so ascribes tangibility to Sinai, as by implication to ascribe intangibility to Zion. Zion is, and will be in the Millennium, a tangible mountain quite as much as Sinai. It will be strictly an earthly mountain, though on its height heavenly glory will rest as it did for a season on Sinai of old. The omission of the word ορει (*mountain*) in describing Sinai, and its application to Zion only, seems intended to give more vividness to the thought that the stability and authority indicated by that word pertains not to Sinai and its economy, but that it is the heritage of Zion alone.

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connected with it, is to be the earthly centre of that economy to which we belong—the economy of the New Covenant.

The Temple also at Jerusalem is to be another seat or resting-place of Divine manifested glory. Thus in Ezekiel xliii. 1, we read; "After, he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: and, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and His voice was like the noise of many waters: and the earth shined with His glory. . . . And the glory of Jehovah came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east. So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of Jehovah filled the house. . . . And He said unto me, Son of man, the place of My throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell (אשכן) in the midst of the children of Israel for ever" etc. But whilst there will be these resting-places of the Divine glory in the earth, its home will be above the heavens. High above Zion (visible indeed to the earth, but far away and separate from it) will be the heavenly City, new Jerusalem; called in the Hebrews ΕΠΟΥΡΑΝΙΑ, answering to עליהשמים in Ps. viii. indicating that its location is to be *above* the created heavens. Again, beyond the heavenly City will be the Heaven of heavens—the dwelling place of God—this answering to the Holy of Holies in the typical Tabernacle, whilst the heavenly City will be the antitype to the Holy Place, and the earthly Jerusalem to the external Court where Israel worshipped.

Thus then we read of four tabernacles or dwelling-places (משכנות) of Divine glory, *viz.*, the Temple; Mount Zion; the heavenly City; and Heaven: the two first being at Jerusalem, but all being *connected*

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with it: whence Jerusalem is called in Ps. xlvi. 4—"the holy place of *the Tabernacles* of the Most High:"—משכני עליון. It is as contemplating this glory that the speaker in this Psalm says, "How beloved are Thy Tabernacles, O Jehovah of Hosts."

It should be observed that ידיד always signifies "beloved," and never "amiable." *Hengstenberg.* See Deut. xxxiii. 12. "The beloved of the Lord shall dwell" etc. This word expresses the general character of the Psalm as showing that the saints of God will not then esteem for a light thing the blessings which God has given, but will appreciate them in a manner worthy of their excellency. Want of appreciation of the privileges and blessings bestowed by God on His people has been a marked characteristic even of true Christianity in our dispensation: but it will be otherwise when Israel shall be graffed back into their own olive tree.

VERSE 2

2 My soul hath longed, yea, even pined for the Courts of Jehovah,
My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

The words used in the first clause of this verse are expressive of the strongest and most vehement desire. The first verb כסף *to long vehemently*, signifies strictly *to become pale*, either with desire, or terror, or shame; whence כסף, *silver*, because of its pale colour. It is here used in *Niphal* in a transitive sense, as in Gen. xxxi. 30. "Thou sore *longedst* after thy father's house." See also its use in Zeph. ii. 1, where הגוי לא נכסף had better be translated, "O nation not *ashamed*," and not "O nation not desired." *See* Gesenius.*

* See also his remarks on the first clause of Zeph. ii. 1. He takes קשק in Hithpoel in a metaphorical sense as meaning

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The second word, כלה *to pine* or *waste away* from grief or earnest desire, is continually applied to the "soul," or "spirit," or "eyes," or "reins" as *pining* or *languishing*. *See* Lam. ii. 11, Ps. cxliii. 7.

In the millennial age the experiences of the spared in Israel will stand in marvellous contrast with all that they will have previously known. They will suddenly come out of the very depth of the night of darkness into the joy and brightness of the millennial morning—"the morning without clouds." When the day of glory breaks, a large part of the spared remnant of Israel will be found in distant lands, for they will have been scattered to the four winds of heaven. There, in the earth's uttermost parts, where they and their fathers will have known many

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"*to gather one's self*" in the sense of reflection—"*to collect one's* thoughts together." In this case it would be a call to Israel to reflection and self-examination before they drew near unto God. Much of the difficulty in understanding the prophets arises from not remembering that there frequently occur abrupt parentheses and exclamations which interrupt the construction. I should translate the whole passage thus: "Consider and gather yourselves [unto me] O nation not ashamed, before the decree bringeth forth (like chaff the day hath passed); before that there cometh on you the fury of the wrath of Jehovah, before that there cometh on you the day of the wrath of Jehovah. Seek ye Jehovah, all ye meek of the earth etc." I understand "the decree" to refer to the decree of Antichrist abolishing the worship of Jehovah in Israel and establishing his own. Before it "bringeth forth," *i.e.* produceth its results in bringing on the day of the wrath of Jehovah, "consider (קשׁשׁ in Hithpoel) and gather (קשׁשׁ in Kal) yourselves unto me." After the decree of evil had been mentioned there is a parenthetical exclamation speaking of the day *of evil* as a thing past—something that was, but is not;—like chaff the day [of evil] has passed: its fleeting, transitory character being thus indicated.

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a year of bitterness and woe, will the tidings reach them that "Jehovah hath founded Zion, and that the poor of His people shall trust in it." Thus they shall return to Jerusalem; many of them slowly and gradually—some being gathered "one by one" (*See* Is. xxvii. 12). This Psalm may be regarded as the utterance of one *late* returning, and thus expressing his apprehension of that which God had wrought for His people. It is the expression of one whose soul after having long experienced darkness, captivity, oppression and woe, beholds for the first time the blessedness and glory of the Courts of the Jehovah of Israel—longs after and faints for them, and is about to have those longings satisfied with full fruition: for he will find himself permitted and commanded to enter those Courts of praise. See Ps. cxxxv. 1. "Praise ye Jehovah. Praise ye the name of Jehovah; praise Him, O ye servants of Jehovah. Ye that stand in the house of Jehovah, in the courts of the house of our God. . . . For Jehovah hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, and Israel for His peculiar treasure." This nearness of Israel to God, the speaker in this Psalm is about fully to prove—a nearness involving the possession of outward as well as inward blessings; for the time when the servants of the Truth are esteemed as "the filth of the world and the off-scouring of all things" will have passed; nor will God any longer appoint tribulation as the portion of His people. The discrepancy which is at present found between the inward blessings and outward circumstances of the redeemed will then cease. "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Is. xxxv. 10). Hence the expression in this Psalm—"my heart and *my flesh* crieth out for the living

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God." The outer as well as the inner man will then be expectant of, and will receive, plenitude of blessing from Jehovah.

The word translated "cry out," רנן, is used either of the cry of joy—its most frequent meaning; or of the cry of anguish, as of parents bereft of their children (*see* Lam. ii. 19); or of earnest remonstrance, as Proverbs i. 20. It is a word expressive of great depth of feeling Here it denotes the cry of intense desire.

VERSE 3

3 Yea the sparrow hath found a house;
And the swallow a nest for herself,
Where she hath set her young,
Even thine altars, O Jehovah of Hosts
My King and my God.

This is an interesting verse, as showing that the least things of creation will then have found an abiding shelter under redemption, which the altar represents. At present it is far otherwise. Creation groans in the bondage of corruption. Neither the beasts of the field, nor the birds of the air, nor the fishes of the deep are at rest. They are pursued by fear or by hunger, by pain or by death. The sparrow and the swallow quail before the storm, or before the hawk, or the destroying hand of man. Creature preys upon creature: terror and destruction reign: and there is nothing that can be said to repose in peacefulness. But when the time comes for this Psalm to be fulfilled, the sparrow and the swallow, together with all other of God's earthly creatures, shall rest under the shelter of applied redemption: and God's servants in the earth whose "flesh" also will have

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rest, will know the added joy of beholding creation enjoying its sabbath under redemption. Then the song which John in the vision heard ANTICIPATIVELY sung, will find its accomplishment in "every creature that is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev. v. 13).

My King.] Although Israel and the earth have rejected Jesus, yet believers at present recognize Him as *their* King, for they own His legislation, and conform, or should conform, to the order of that *spiritual* Kingdom which He hath already established in the earth, in anticipation of that coming hour when He will assert His title not only as "Head of the Church," but as "Head over all things"—"King of kings, and Lord of lords;" before whom "all kings shall fall down;" whom "all nations shall serve" (Ps. lxxii). The Father, because of His being rejected, hath said unto Him, "Sit Thou at My right hand until I shall have set (ἑως ἀν θω) Thy foes a footstool for Thy feet" (Mark xii. 36). When that footstool has been constituted He shall be brought before the Ancient of days (*see* Dan. vii.) and solemnly invested with the sovereignty of earth. This is the period referred to in the Revelation when it is said, that there were heard great voices in heaven saying, "The sovereignty of the world (ἡ βασιλεια του κοσμου) has become the sovereignty of our Lord and of His Christ." Again, "We give Thee thanks O Lord God Almighty, that is, and that was, because *Thou hast taken to Thee* Thy great power and hast reigned." It is of this future period that we are to understand those ascriptions of *Kingship* to Christ by Israel and the nations that are

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so common in the prophetic Psalms. They belong to a period when the power of Christ will be so definitely applied to the government of earth as for all the arrangements of human life to be effectually ordered thereby. He will not be then a rejected King, but a King "inaugurated" on Zion—recognized—acknowledged, and obeyed.

VERSE 4

4 O the happinesses of the dwellers in thy House!
They will be still praising thee. Selah.

O the happinesses of.] אשרים, *prosperities, happinesses* is to be distinguished from ברכים, *blessings*. When God *blesses*, then happiness results.*

The resurrection-glory of the "Church of the first-born ones who are enrolled in heaven" (Heb. xii. 23), or as they are prospectively termed in Daniel, "the saints of the high places," (קדישי עליונין) will be a very prominent subject of contemplation to millennial Israel. They will see in the risen saints as "first-fruits from the earth" (Rev. xiv.) a pattern and pledge of that unearthly glory which they themselves will finally inherit in the *New* Heavens and *New* Earth. The millennial saints, as being in earthly bodies, will have for their present dwelling place, *earth;* whereas the risen saints being in spiritual bodies, will have for their home, *heaven*—the dwelling place of God. The verse before us I understand as applying to the risen saints as being "*dwellers* in His House." Compare Rev. iii. 12. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God and *he shall no more go out.*" No duties, no employments, no needs

[* See page 73]

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such as the saints of God are conversant with during their sojourn in this fallen earth, shall any longer affect these "dwellers in His House," so as to interrupt the perpetual employment of their energies in things that *immediately* and *directly* concern the interests of God and His Kingdom.

VERSES 5, 6

5 O the happinesses of man!
Strength is unto him in Thee:
The highways are in their hearts—

6 Passing through the valley of Baca they make it a well:
Moreover with blessings the early rain covereth it.

O the happinesses of man.] "Man" is here used in a collective sense, and denotes the redeemed who will be yet dwellers on earth: so that there is a contrast between this verse and the preceding—the preceding verse referring to those who have their dwelling place above. We might perhaps have expected in such a verse as this to have found the happiness of *Israel* and not of *Man* emphasized. But it is not so. The blessings subsequently described are not restricted to Israel but include Man within their scope. All amongst *men* who find their strength in the Jehovah of Israel are included.

In interpreting this and like passages, when in the original the clauses are independent and not united by connecting particles, it has been, for the most part, the habit of interpreters to link the clauses together by particles arbitrarily supplied. But the supply of such links takes from these passages their true vividness, which is preserved by their being read as exclamations of one whose eye glances with wondering admiration at various objects presented in quick succession to his regard, and

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who rapidly and abruptly expresses his apprehensions. There are many examples of this in prophetic Scripture.

Strength is unto him in Thee.] That is, strength is now become his in Thee. He is possessed of it now. It is not only strength proposed, but strength possessed. Israel had been slow in apprehending where their strength was. But now not only Israel, but *man* had learned the lesson, and found their strength in Jehovah.

The highways are in their hearts.] The former clause is evidently most comprehensive in its scope. The thoughts of the speaker are directed towards the condition of men generally as having at last found their strength in Jehovah. It may be questioned whether this clause is co-extensive with the former, or of more restricted reference; whether the pronoun "*their*" is to be referred to man in the previous clause; or whether the mind of the speaker suddenly passes on to a fresh subject of contemplation, and speaks of some *amongst* men whom he sees employed for the blessing of man—persons whose hearts and energies are devoted to the facilitating the approach of their fellow-men to Jehovah—who are enabled to open fountains of water in dry places, and who in recognition of their service are permitted like Moses and the elders of Israel at Sinai, to ascend to the height of Zion, and there to appear in the presence of God. The latter is the interpretation I adopt. I regard the speaker as concentrating his view on a body of faithful labourers in the midst of Israel and of men, and as describing their employments and their honour.

It must be remembered that one of the chief characteristics of the millennial age will be the multiplication of what may be called symbolic facts—facts blessed in themselves, but chiefly blessed because of that which they are appointed to signify. Thus to behold the

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wolf and the lamb dwelling in peace together will be a fact that is in itself blessed; but that which it symbolizes will be yet more blessed, for it denotes that universality of peace, outward and inward, which will prevail wheresoever the sceptre of Jesus shall be owned. The like may be said of the waters described in Ezekiel as going forth from the sanctuary in the Holy City, and healing the waters of the seas. See Ezek. xlvii. and Zech. xiv. 8, and Joel iii. 18. No doubt this will be a fact, but a *symbolic* fact. It will indicate that flow of spiritual blessing that shall go forth from Jerusalem as the place which shall then be the appointed centre of light and truth to all peoples. Another symbolic fact in the millennial age will be the preparation of ***highways***, with a view to the earth being subdued and brought under control so as for a right direction to be given to its energies, especially by connecting it with Jerusalem as the great centre of Divine instruction and government in the earth. "Many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." We are all familiar with the moral force of such expressions as "safe paths," "wise paths," "happy paths," and the like. When the path is right all is well. "A way cast up" is in Scripture the symbol of a care graciously exercised towards the wayfaring stranger whereby he is enabled to proceed in the right direction as well as safely—dangers, ruggedness, and stumbling-blocks being removed. Thus we read in Proverbs xv. 19: "the way of the righteous is made plain," or, more literally as given in the margin, "*raised up as a causeway.*" And in Jeremiah "to walk in a way not

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cast up " is regarded as identical with walking in a way that causeth stumbling. " Because My people hath forgotten Me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, *in a way not cast up* " (Jer. xviii. 15). Thus too Job in describing the bearing down upon him of *afflictive* power from the hand of God says, " His troops come together, and *raise up their way* against me " (Job. xix. 12.) And again, " upon my right hand rise the youth : they push away my feet, they *raise up against me the ways* of their destruction, they mar my path *etc.*" From these passages we can well understand the symbolic force of those Scriptures which speak of highways being prepared or " cast up," in order that the power of light, truth, and blessing that is to be concentrated in Jerusalem may be accessible to the whole earth, and made to penetrate all nations ; so that they may cease to walk in " paths causing to stumble," and may find instead, paths that lead to and associate with blessing. Thus in Is. lvii. 13, 14, we read : " He that putteth his trust in Me shall possess the land, and shall inherit My holy mountain ; and shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up the way (כלו כלו), make clear the path, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of My people," עמי *i.e.* Israel. See also Isaiah lxii. 10. " Go through, go through the gates ; prepare ye the way of the people (העם, Israel) ; cast ye up, cast ye up the highway ; gather out the stones ; lift up a standard to the peoples (העמים)." Also xlix. 9-11. " That thou mayst say to the prisoners, Go forth ; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst ; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them : for he that hath mercy on

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them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. *And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be raised up* (מסלותי ירמון). Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim" (*i.e.* the north-eastern parts of Asia). See also Is. xxxv. 8-10. "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

We can well understand, therefore, how it will be one of the honours and privileges of those who appreciate the blessings of Zion, to go forth from their place of rest and strength in order to facilitate the approach of others thereunto, and to remove all hindrances that obstruct either access to, or the diffusion of, the blessings that God will have prepared for all peoples. See Is. xxv. 6. That the energies of many will be employed in preparing OUTWARD means for access to Zion and for dissemination of its blessings will be, no doubt, a fact, but a *symbolic* fact. It will indicate the appointment by God of abundant spiritual labourers, who, like Paul in his day, shall seek to make straight and easy paths for the feet of them who fear the Lord. Of all who so labour, it may well be said that "the highways are in their hearts"—*i.e.* that the delight of their souls is in preparing safe, peaceful, and happy ways for the steps of God's people. They not only themselves understand

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the ways of God, but the joy of their hearts is in bringing others to the knowledge of them; that they, too, might walk in them, and find them ways of "pleasantness and peace."

Passing through [*or when traversers of*] *the valley of Baca they make it a well.*] Whether we take the valley of Baca* to mean a valley of tears, or of dark shady trees, it is evidently regarded as a place of sorrow and of *drought;* for if *drought* were not intended there would be no force in the contrast of "springs" or "wells of water" and "rain." The emblem of a dry and thirsty land turned into water-springs is frequently found in Scripture, especially in connexion with the blessings of Israel in the millennial day. "Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honour Me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the

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* *Gesenius* says, "בכא, *weeping, lamentation,*—עמק הבכא, *the valley of weeping or lamentation,* name of a valley in Palestine, so called from some reason connected with its name; probably, gloomy and sterile." *Hengstenberg* remarks: "The old translators, with wonderful agreement, give to בכא the sense of *weeping;* and even the Massorah remarks that the א at the end stands instead of ה (בכה meaning to weep.) Others on the ground that the form with the א never occurs, consider Baca as the name of a tree which is mentioned in 2 Sam. v. 23, 24, (and the parallel passage in Chron.) according to the old translators, *a mulberry tree;* according to Celsus in his sacred botany, a tree something like the balsam shrub. If we adopt this view, we must consider that the reason why the valley of the Baca tree is mentioned, is that the tree has its name from weeping, so that in reality the sense is the same as in the former view—*in the valley of the tear-shrubs.*"

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wilderness and rivers in the desert to give drink to My people, My chosen" (Is. xliii. 19, 20). See also Is. xlix. already quoted, and many like passages.

The opening up springs in dry places is in an especial sense emblematical of the ministry of those who are employed, under God, to unfold the consolations of grace in the midst of circumstances of weakness and sorrow. Such was the ministration of Paul—such will be the ministrations of others, by and by, when the dawn of the millennial day shall break on a groaning world, and on a "poor and afflicted" remnant (*see* Zeph. iii. 12) left in the midst of Israel. The diffusion of light and blessing in the Millennium will be gradual; and instrumental ministry will be abundantly employed. While man remains in the flesh he will never be independent of those consolations which grace has provided for weakness and sin.

Moreover with blessings the early rain covereth it.] This seems the preferable rendering of this verse.* See

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* If we were to translate ברכות *pools*, as if it were the plural of ברכה, the pointing would be different, as in the other cases where it occurs in the plural, Cant. vii. 4, Eccl. ii. 6. But ברכה is *blessing*.

The root of מורה, *early or autumnal rain* is ירה, the primary signification of which is, *he cast*. Hence it is used in the sense of *scatter*, and thence *to moisten* as by scattering water. Hence מורה and יורה are used of the *former rain* which falls in Palestine in autumn, preparing the earth to receive the seed. See *Gesenius* on יורה. In this sense it is used in Joel ii. 23, which I should render thus—"Therefore ye children of Zion, be glad and rejoice in Jehovah your God, for He hath given to you the early rain of righteousness (המורה לצדקה—the rain that is to produce righteousness) and hath shed upon you rain, the early rain and the latter rain (מלקוש from לקש, *to be ripe*, used of the later

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Gesenius, word עשה. This subjoined clause describes the immediate ministration of the hand of God, in pouring out blessings from above in addition to those ministrations in which His servants are employed below. To penetrate the dry and hardened ground, and dig for the well in the desert, is *their* employment. Thus we read of the Princes of Israel in the wilderness, digging, at the command of the Lawgiver, with their pilgrim staves, and forthwith sprang up the well, and Israel rejoiced and sang, saying, "Spring up, O well, sing ye unto it" (Numbers xxi. 17). Whenever the servants of God stand with the staff of their pilgrimage in their hand (a condition very contrasted with that of sitting down to eat and drink and rising up to play) and so occupy the place to which obedience to the command of their Lawgiver leads,—when they seek as Princes in Israel to cheer and lead on others through the wilderness into the rest, they will always find that they have a measure of ability to dig for and to find the wells of God's strengthening and refreshing Truth. God's servants may, through His grace which desires to put honour upon them, be employed in digging for the well in the dry and thirsty valley; but "rain" we dig not for: it is God's gift, coming from above, apart from any instrumentality of ours. In another

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or spring rain which falls in Palestine in the months of March and April before the harvest—see *Gesenius*) *first*," that is, before shedding it on other peoples. The reasons given by Hengstenberg and others for understanding מורה in the sense of "*teacher*" are altogether unsatisfactory. Compare Hosea x. 12. "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy: break up the fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you."—ירוה צדק לכם.

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millennial Psalm we read—"Rain of freenesses (גשם נדבות—that is blessing given in the freeness and fulness in which the willingness of love delights to give it) Thou wilt dispense, O God. Thine inheritance, when it was weary, Thou hast established" (Ps. lxviii. 9).

VERSE 7

7 They go from company to company:
Each shall appear before God in Zion.

They go from company to company or *from band to band* —de turmâ ad turmam, מחיל אל־חיל.] This word חיל is used continually of strength of resources whether of wealth, or of armies, or of defences, such as walls or bulwarks. Here it evidently means hosts or cohorts set in manifold positions of strength, and doubtless refers to those various divisions of the "hosts" or "mighty ones" of the God of Israel, which will be distributed in various positions of strength on the sides of Zion, or on the mountains connected with Zion: for Zion will then be miraculously exalted above all the mountains that will begirt *it* as well as Jerusalem. In the height of Zion will be the glory of the Lord, as on Sinai of old; but there will be various and successive out-posts all occupied by those appointed guardians whose province it will be to watch over Jerusalem and Israel—the whole constituting (the height of Zion included) that which is called in Rev. xx. 9 ἡ παρεμβολη των ἁγιων, "*the encampment or citadel of the saints*," which is distinguished from Jerusalem itself, which is called "the beloved City." Both will be encompassed in that last great apostasy, which is, at the close of the Millennium, to conclude the history of this Adamic earth. I understand the word חיל to refer more to the glorious companies that occupy

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these various positions of strength, than to the positions themselves. Compare Ps. xlviii. 12, which is also millennial. "Walk about Zion and go round about her; tell the towers thereof: mark well her bulwarks (חילה) consider her palaces" *etc.*

Each shall appear before God in Zion.] That is, each of those so occupied shall be honoured by being allowed to pass through the series of glorious companies that begirt the Mountain of God, and so to reach the height of Zion, and there appear in the presence of the God of Israel. Compare Exodus xxiv. 9. "Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel He laid not His hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink." In both cases, the thus appearing before God is mentioned as a distinctive honour.

There can be little question that the seventh verse of this Psalm was present to the mind of Paul when he wrote the concluding part of 2 Cor. iii. After adverting to the yet future hour when the veil shall be taken from the now blinded heart of Israel, he speaks in the last verse of the chapter of the transforming effect that the recognition by faith of Christ's glory has, even at present, on the soul; whereby in all who stedfastly by faith behold it, an inwardly transforming change is wrought, progressing from one degree of glory to another; analogous to that advance from one position of glory to another which shall, by and by, in the day of manifestation be granted to those who are here described as passing "from company to company," and so appearing before God in Zion.

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There was no one who estimated more than the Apostle Paul the present condition of the earth as groaning under the power of Satan, and how its deliverance must be delayed until Jerusalem "convert and be healed." He was well able to contrast the character of this present age, ruled as it is by spirits of darkness, with the coming day of light, when "truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven." But he also knew that the resurrection of Christ into glory had commenced "the acceptable day and the day of salvation," and that the millennial day would, as to this, only *manifest* that which faith could already recognize and rejoice in. Hence, taught by the Holy Ghost, he was in the habit of comforting his own soul and the souls of others by applications of millennial passages. Although the time was not yet come for the heralds of the Gospel to go forth and to be welcomed, as by and by they will be, so as for their feet to be pronounced beautiful on the mountains, yet he knew that the ministration of the rejected and despised Gospel was as honourable and precious in the sight of God as when it shall be sent forth to triumph. He knew that there abounded throughout the earth valleys of Baca, in which as truly *now*, as in the coming age, wells to refresh the weary pilgrim might be opened. He looked upon himself as one of the openers of these wells, and rejoiced in the service; the more because he knew that if it should not be the hour for the full outpouring of "the rain" of blessing from on high, wells in the earth were the more needed. He knew also that although he could not prepare ways for the approach of men to Zion's manifested glory, yet that he could and did 'cast up ways" for them whereby they might draw nigh to God and to His governance, and to the

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light of His truth: and, although he could not go from "company to company," so as actually to ascend into the height of Zion's glory, yet his view by faith of Christ's glory, both present and to come, caused him, in the apprehensions of his soul, so to advance from one degree of glory to another, that the experiences of his soul were not less blessed (perhaps more blessed) than that of those who shall, when the time for the accomplishment of this Psalm comes, ascend into the height of Zion and there appear before God, and behold His manifested glory. Millennial Scriptures, therefore, though future in interpretation, have *applications* which faith, rightly instructed, will know how to use for present encouragement, and guidance, and joy of faith.

I would not wish to imply by that which I have here stated, that the Apostle Paul's knowledge of the glory of God was limited to the apprehension of faith realizing the unseen. He, too, like Moses, was admitted into the presence of God. He speaks of having been taken up into the third heaven (whether in the body or out of the body, he did not know), and there hearing things which it was impossible for man to utter. Speaking to the Corinthians of that which he knew and apprehended, he implies that they would esteem him mad, if he disclosed to them all that his soul had realized; and therefore he was "sober" for their sake. "For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause" (2 Cor. v. 13). There was therefore an especial sense in which he could apply to himself the words "from company to company," as used in this millennial Psalm. They are evidently to be connected with the words that he uses in 2 Cor. iii. 18, "from glory unto glory." There too he speaks of "reflecting" (κατοπτριζομενοι), even as Moses had done,

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the glory of the Lord, by an acquaintance with that glory as true as that which had been vouchsafed unto Moses. In Paul's case, however, the "reflection" of which he speaks, was not outward as in the case of Moses, but was moral, indicated by that which was exhibited in his testimony and in his ways. Part of his ministerial training under God was by instruction granted unto him in the knowledge of the glory of God.

VERSES 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

8 O Jehovah, God of hosts, hear my prayer:
Give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

9 Do thou [who art] our shield, behold, O God,
And look upon the face of Thine Anointed.

10 For a day in thy Courts is better than a thousand;
I had rather [literally, I have chosen to] be at the threshold
in the House of my God,
Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

11 For a sun and a shield is Jehovah, God:
Grace and glory will Jehovah give:
He will not withhold good in respect of them who walk
uprightly.

12 O Jehovah of hosts,
Happy is man confiding in Thee!

These words of the returning stranger sufficiently indicate the general condition of Israel after "the Spirit of grace and supplication" has been poured upon them. They will recognize Jehovah as a sun and as a shield, and as the giver of every good and perfect gift—all coming to them through the Anointed. They will walk in paths of integrity and uprightness, and will lead others unto like blessings; so that at last there shall be manifested in the earth the happiness of MAN trusting in God; "*man*" being here again used collectively.

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Israel, when again graffed back into their own olive tree, are the first who will, as a body, continue to maintain unswervingly the testimonies of God. They will uphold His testimonies and not permit the banner of Truth, as their Gentile predecessors have done, to be trampled in the dust. The present ignorance and arrogancy of Gentile Christians, and the manner in which they magnify themselves above Israel, and take from them the privileges and glories which God's faithfulness has given them, is one of the most melancholy evidences of the delusion with which the great enemy of souls has been permitted to darken and deceive.

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NOTES ON ZECHARIAH XIV.

THE whole of this chapter is as yet unfulfilled. It belongs to the very conclusion of the period called in Daniel, "the last end of the indignation" against Jerusalem—when Israel after having returned in hardened unbelief to their own Land (an event, probably, not far distant) will be there made to drink for the last time the cup of trembling from the righteous hand of the Lord their God. The last verse of the preceding chapter is, "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on My name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is My people, and they shall say, Jehovah is my God." The fourteenth chapter is an amplification of this verse. It describes the characteristics and results of that great day of visitation in which the remnant of Israel are refined and forgiven.

Behold a day cometh for Jehovah, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee, etc.*] That is, a day is at hand when Jehovah shall act in vindication of His own great name and outraged Truth; when "He shall take to Himself His own great power and reign," and "shall

* We find יום ליהוה continually used to denote "the day of the Lord": but the interposition of בא between יום and ליהוה in the present case, favours the translation above given. *Bengel* translates, "behold a day cometh for the Lord Jehovah"—Ecce, dies venit Domino Jehovæ. Erit dies quo patefiet Jehovam vera dixisse, per prophetas, et per se omnia expediturum.

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destroy them that destroy the earth " (*See* Rev. xi. 17). " It is time for Thee, O Jehovah, to work, for they have made void Thy law."

VERSE 2

Behold I will gather all the Gentiles against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken; . . . and half of the city shall go into captivity, etc.] This siege and captivity although *immediately preceding* " the day of the Lord," belong not to " the day of the Lord." That day will bring deliverance—not captivity to Jerusalem; and destruction—not triumph to her enemies.

As far as I am aware, this *first* verse of Zechariah xiv. is the only place in Scripture in which this last *triumph* of the Gentiles over Jerusalem is described. Many passages describe in much detail the final assault of the Gentiles on Jerusalem (an assault of which this *capture* is the immediate precursor) but in that final *assault* the Gentiles do *not* triumph. They do not capture Jerusalem or lead her people into captivity. On the contrary, Jerusalem is delivered, and *they* utterly destroyed. (See all the subsequent part of this chapter, as also Zech. xii.—Joel ii. and iii.—Isaiah xxix. and many other like passages).

Behold I will gather all the Gentiles. כל הגוים—*παντα τα εθνη.*] " Jerusalem," said our Lord, " shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." There are a certain selected body of Gentile nations (the book of Daniel defines them) to whom the office of afflicting and " treading down " Jerusalem is, for a limited period, assigned. " The ten kingdoms " into which the whole Roman World (*πασα η οικουμενη*) is finally to be divided, are they that will exercise this power against Jerusalem for the last time.

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Their history concludes "the times of the Gentiles." Whenever, therefore, this expression "all the Gentiles" is applied to the Gentiles nationally as putting forth their lordly power over Jerusalem, it is limited to the nations which form the subject of Daniel's prophecy —the nations of the prophetic earth, as they are sometimes called. It should also be observed that when nations are described as being gathered *as nations*, it is not meant that every individual comes, but they who are governmentally and executively the constituted representatives of their power.

The nations spoken of in this verse are, in a subsequent part of the chapter, referred to *as a limited number*, for they are described as the nations that have fought against Jerusalem, by which it is implied that there will be other nations which will *not* have so fought. In Rev. xvi. where the gathering of these same Gentiles is described, they are said to be the kings and armies (*της οικουμενης ὁλης*) of the whole Roman World—kings who are elsewhere mentioned (*see* Rev. xvii. 12) as being *ten*.

We are not expressly told what it is that at that moment excites the rage of Antichrist and of the ten kingdoms against Jerusalem. We know, however, how of old the Jews continually wavered in their allegiance to their first Chaldæan masters, even when the yoke put upon them was comparatively light. See 2 Kings xxiv. and xxv., and Jeremiah xl. xli. etc. We may well imagine, therefore, how they will writhe under the pitiless power of Antichrist who "will tread them down like the mire of the streets." And when we remember, likewise, that Antichrist, at the moment to which this chapter refers, is engaged in gathering all the strength of the Roman World to Armageddon, with the view of meeting

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his Asiatic enemies who will be threatening his great eastern city, it is not likely that he would leave behind him in the rear of his march, a people like the Jews whose fidelity he suspected. Besides which, "the two witnesses" (Rev. xi.) will have produced by their testimony no little effect on Jerusalem. They will *there* have defied the power of Antichrist; and it is probably in relation to this very siege and capture that Antichrist is said to "make war upon them and kill them." But, whatever the reasons, it is evident that Antichrist and the kings of the Roman World, whilst the gathering at Armageddon is taking place, attack and *capture* Jerusalem. "The city shall be taken, the houses rifled . . . and half the city shall go into captivity, but the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city."

The sparing of "a residue" is one of the characteristic circumstances by which the futurity of this passage is proved; for when the Romans last took Jerusalem in the time of Hadrian, not a single Jew was left in the city. "The subject here," says Bengel, "is not the siege by the Romans, but another siege of Jerusalem *yet future*. . . . The residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city, for salvation from the Lord shall intervene."—(*Bengel in locum*).

VERSE 3

And Jehovah shall go forth and fight against those nations as when He fought in the day of conflict.] Close consecution is often expressed in Hebrew by ו—by our translators rendered in this passage "*then*." A very brief period will intervene between the carrying away half the city into captivity, and the *final* assault of Antichrist. He will assault Jerusalem, not with the

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view of securing his hold upon it (for he will already have it in his grasp) nor with the object of simply scattering the remnant who had been left. His purpose will go far beyond that. He and those with him, will say, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance" (Ps. lxxxiii. 4). Antichrist will know that whilst the names of Jerusalem and of Israel continue in the earth, there will remain a living memento of the name and power of Jehovah. This he will abhor. Like Haman, his object will be to exterminate the very name and remembrance of Israel. Up to this moment God will "refrain" Himself. Up to this point "the great words and blasphemies" will be allowed to progress. But they will progress no further—"the day of the Lord's vengeance, the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion" will have come.

We are expressly told in Daniel that it is when the blasphemies of Antichrist have been consummated, then —not before, the session of the Ancient of days will take place in heaven (*See* Dan. vii. 21, 22). It is a judicial scene. Inquisition will be held, and sentence will be passed on the nations who have glorified and worshipped Antichrist: the governmental power of earth, long delegated to man, will be taken from him and committed to Christ (*See* Dan. vii. 14). "Great voices will be heard in heaven, saying, the sovereignty of the world has become the sovereignty of our Lord and of His Christ;" and thus, in heaven, by this unseen transfer of power (unseen, I mean, by earth), the Day of Christ *will commence in heaven.* The Son of man will assume this power in order that He may act for God, and reign till He has subdued every enemy. Accordingly, He will rend the heavens and come down. "He will

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come in His own glory and in the Father's and in the glory of the holy angels." His saints, in raised and glorified bodies, shall meet Him in the air. Thence He will come to Olivet, and there, as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, will confront His enemies with His glorious and heavenly power. "Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure." The wine-press will be trodden in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and Israel, even all that are written in the book, will be delivered (*See* Dan. xii. 1). Yet it will be but a remnant. "Though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet (only) a remnant of them shall return" (*See* Is. x. 21, 22).

VERSES 4, 5

And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives.] As truly and as literally as they stood there in the day of His humiliation. "The topography," says Bengel, "is accurately given; and to explain it figuratively would be wickedness. For this very reason the text describes the mountain with such precision and distinctness, in order that the interpreter might not slip aside into allegory."*

The Mount of Olives was the place to which the Lord Jesus was accustomed to retire in the days of His humiliation. It was the constant witness of His sorrows. There, was Bethany (the house of the afflicted one), and there too was Gethsemane. When ministering in Jerusalem during the day He was wont to retire by night

* "Topographia accurata, quam metaphorice explicare nefas sit. Hac ipsa intentione textus Montem sic præcise et determinate describit, ut ne ad allegoriam dilabatur interpres."—*Bengel in locum.*

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to the Mount of Olives. Thence too He ascended into Heaven. As the Mount of Olives was the last place on which His feet stood in earth, so it will be the first on which they will stand when He returns. The Mount of Olives then, as if in testimony to the presence of the glory of the God of Israel, will divide in twain. Whilst, therefore, it remains as it still does, undivided, it supplies an abiding evidence that this chapter remains unfulfilled.

The rent or chasm in the mountain is to extend eastward and westward; the parts thus divided receding, the one northward, the other southward. The western rent or chasm will probably extend into Jerusalem, dividing and overthrowing it. Yet this will be but one of the mighty convulsions of that day. "Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at Thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of Thy nostrils" (Ps. xviii. 15). "Now hath he promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven" (Heb. xii. 26).

Israel, unprepared and panic-struck, will flee. "Yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Israel: and Jehovah my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." It would argue a fearful hardihood of unbelief to reject words so plain, so simple, as these. Compare Jude, verse 14. "Behold the Lord cometh with His holy myriads" (*εν ἁγιαις μυριασιν αυτου*)—saints and angels. And Joel iii. 11. "Thither cause Thy mighty ones (the hosts of heaven) to come down, O Jehovah."

VERSE 6

And it shall come to pass in that day, light shall not be. לא יהיה אור.] Because all the natural sources both of

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light and heat will be withdrawn. "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. *The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.* The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem: and the heavens and the earth shall shake" (Joel iii. 14-16). See also Is. xiii. 10. "The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." And our Lord's words in Matt. xxiv. 29. "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light; and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." This is consistently the testimony of Scripture throughout. Well therefore may the prophet say, "*there shall not be light.*"

Brightnesses and congelation. יקרות וקפאון] Such would be the rendering if we adopt the *Keri*, וקפאון instead of יקפאון.

We might expect abruptness in describing a scene so strange and so terrible. The eye of the Prophet fixes itself on the awful scene of darkness where all natural light had ceased to be, and beholds in the midst of it a brightness of glory too excellent and too terrible to be described. The glory of heaven will be there—the glory of angels, and of the saints, and of the Lord. The description, therefore, is conveyed in one brief and expressive word, *brightnesses, i.e. fulness or completeness of brightness.* The verb יקר from which יקרות is derived means *to be weighty* and therefore *precious, costly, magnificent, honourable.* Thus in Ps. xlv., "Kings' daughters were among thine *honourable women*," (ביקרותיך). See also Job xxxi. 26. "The moon walking in *brightness.*"

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The next word וקפאון, if we follow the *Keri*, means *congelation*—a state of being "*curdled*," from קפא to *contract ones' self*, to *coagulate*; and in *Niphal*, to be *contracted* or *frozen*. See Exodus xv. 8—"the depths were *congealed* in the heart of the sea." And Job x. 10, "Hast not Thou curdled me" (caused me to be curdled, *Hiphil*) "like cheese."

In the present passage this word would forcibly express the effect of the presence of the Divine glory on all the vigour and strength of nature, especially as found in man. Their hearts will be in that day like the heart of Nabal, *congealed, curdled*. Nabal's heart "died within him and he became as a stone" (1 Sam. xxv. 37).

Some, however, retain the reading in the text יקפרון, and translate, "brightnesses shall be restrained or withheld." Others, again, take קרות frigora, as in Proverbs xvii 27. See note subjoined.* The LXX seem to have adopted this rendering, *ουκ εσται φως. και ψυχη*

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* Bengel's note is as follows:—יקרות וקפאון. Duæ hæ voces nec separari plane, nec cum precedenti voce *lux* construi possunt. Pendent potius a verbo substantivo *erit*, per enallagen, et antitheton habent ad *lux*, non sine epitasi. *Non erit lux*, erunt potius *Jekarot vekippaon*. De his vocibus eximia est *Hilleri* sententia in *Arcano* p. 370. Verbum is existimat esse per *Keri* et *Kethibh* cum nomine permutatum et unam, *lectionem*, sic vertit: *non erit lux, frigora potius et congelatio*. Alteram, *scriptionem*, sic vertit: *Non erit lux, frigoribus congelascent*, scilicet peccatores, aut, *frigora congelabunt*.—יקרות, addit, *accipio pro* קרות *frigora*, ut Prov. xvii. 27. וקר רוח *et frigidus spiritus*, pro יקר רוח *frigidus spiritu novit prudentiam. Dies* ergo *ille* dupliciter describitur, *negative, non erit lux* (quæ alias tamen *diei* propria est) et positive, *frigora et congelatio*, frigoris effectus (quæ alias *nocti* solent tribui et tenebris), quo ipso patet τὸ וקפאון, quod Keri est, genuinum esse, et τὸ Jod in Kethibh natum esse ex alliteratione ad præcedens יקרות.

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και παγος ; and *Ben Melech* as quoted by *Gill*, "non erit lux ; frigora potius et congelatio "—" there shall not be light ; but rather coldness and congelation."

VERSE 7

And it shall be one day—יום אחד]. Because the covenant made with Noah forbids that the order of nature should be so interrupted as for the succession of day and night to be broken. The preternatural withdrawal of light, therefore, and everything else that interrupts the appointed order of nature, will cease, as soon as the evening of that *one* great day of visitation comes.

Not day, nor night.] There will not be the light of day, because all the natural sources of light will be withdrawn : neither will there be the darkness of night, because the glory of Him who will be revealed in flaming fire will spread over all things an unnatural light. " A fire goeth before Him and burneth up His enemies round about : " —" His lightnings enlightened the world ; the earth saw and trembled " (Ps. xcvii. 3, 4).

At evening time it shall be light.] As soon as the evening of that " *one* " day of visitation comes, nature resumes her course. Light is again restored. The heavens though altered (for the " powers of the heavens shall be shaken ") again shine peacefully, and released creation begins to manifest that it is delivered from its present groan.

The full development, however, and order of the millennial glory of Zion and of Israel, does not instantly ensue. The ordering of the glory of the saints in heavenly places, and in the heavenly city, will be established first, and the ordering of earth will follow. The

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new moral order too, which is to prevail over Israel and the nations, will be gradually extended. Many nations that have not been bound up with Antichrist, but yet have been inveterately evil will be visited by special inflictions from the Lord's hand; and certain manifestations of rebellion will be crushed with overwhelming wrath. This will be especially seen in an early attempt made by the Gog and Magog (or central Asiatic) nations to possess themselves of the Land of Israel before the Jews are fully settled there, or the full order of the millennial glory established. But they will not for a moment prosper. They will be instantly destroyed with overwhelming judgment; and it shall be known to the ends of the earth that Israel have been taken under the everlasting shelter of the Lord their God.*

VERSE 8

And it shall come to pass in that day that living waters shall go forth from Jerusalem.] It is not said how early in the millennial day this shall be, but doubtless very early. The Millennium will abound with *living*

* This early invasion of the Gog and Magog nations must not be confounded with that which the same nations undertake at the close of the Millennium. The first is described in Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix.; the second in Rev. xx. However great may be the results of light, and peace, and blessing that, through the graciousness of the Lord, follow the exercise of His millennial power, yet it must be remembered that the primary object of that reign is "to subdue enemies" (*see* 1. Cor. xv. 25), and to reign in righteousness. Therefore He shall "*rebuke*" many nations. The Millennium, how great soever its blessedness, is not a perfect scene, nor the final dispensation. The new heavens and earth in which righteousness is to dwell, are not created until the millennial reign has terminated by the destruction of the last enemy.

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symbols. The lion and the lamb feeding together will be a symbol of peace and moral concord, and will teach the character of Messiah's reign; but it will be a fact—a fact in itself, blessed; for it will show the abolition of a mighty power of evil that has since the Fall held creation in bondage, and made it groan. So the going forth of living waters from Jerusalem and the diffusion thereby of a healing and remedial power throughout the waters of the deep (the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean are specified as examples) will be a fact, but a symbolic fact. It will teach of that stream of spiritual light and knowledge that shall then, through converted Israel, go forth to all nations causing all the ends of the earth "to fear Him" (Ps. lxvii. 7). Ethiopia then shall "soon stretch out her hands unto God" (Ps. lxviii. 31). Compare Ezekiel xlvii. where the going forth of these waters is more fully described.

In summer and in winter shall it be.] The flow of these healing streams shall be perpetual. Neither the drought of summer nor the cold of winter shall affect their perennial flow. The flow of light and spiritual truth from Jerusalem shall be no less uninterrupted.

The mention of "summer and winter" in this passage shows, that, in the Millennium, the order of the seasons will be continued as now: and if the withering effects of heat and cold are not as now produced, it will be in consequence of the *miraculous* interference of the power of God. In the Millennium, we are to see, not the extinction of all the agencies which have hitherto borne sorrowfully on human life, but their *restraint* or modification by means of other agencies that will operate for blessing. Compare Is. iv. 5, 6, where we read of a "refuge," "defence," "covert" etc., which words show that there will be agencies still in operation, the effects

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of which must be averted miraculously. It will be otherwise in "the New Heavens and New Earth," where no agencies tending to destruction or sorrow will be known.

VERSE 9

And Jehovah shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Jehovah, and his name one.] "At present," says the Apostle, "there are gods many, and lords many." "What the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God." This is as true of idolatrous Christendom as of heathendom. Devils can be worshipped under the names of Mary or Peter, as well as under the names of Diana or Venus. So will it continue to be till the day of the Lord has come, and then the name of Jehovah alone shall be exalted.

Nor will Jehovah, *then*, be recognized simply as God in heaven: He will also be THE King over all the earth; *i.e.*, the one owned and recognized King. The administration of power in the earth will no longer be left to the hand of man. To Christ will be "given dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages, should serve Him" (Dan. vii. 14). Read also Ps. lxxii., which will not find its fulfilment till then. See also Jer. xxiii. 5. Yet Heaven, not earth, will be the home of Christ and of the risen saints.

VERSE 10

All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and it shall be lifted up, etc.] The levelling of all this district to the south of Jerusalem, is another of the great local changes that is to result from the advent of that great day. There is to

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be a corresponding elevation of Jerusalem and of Zion. See Is. ii. 2. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the house of Jehovah (Zion) shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills." I have already observed that the Millennium is a period of *symbolic* facts. The elevation of Zion is an emblem, not only of the exaltation of Truth in that day, but of its *conspicuousness*. Zion is to be as a beacon to the nations, and therefore should be easily discerned. It is to be the centre of the earth's guidance; therefore approach thereunto should be rendered easy. Hills shall be changed into a plain. The outward changes are but symbolic indications of that which will be morally and spiritually true in that day.

And shall dwell in her place.] That is, Jerusalem shall take up her abode and settle down abidingly in her own place; in contrast with the time when she had been "desolate, a captive, *and removing to and fro*" (Is. xlix 21). The translation adopted in our version ("*shall be inhabited*") is quite admissible; for יָשַׁב in *Kal* is used thus in Is. xiii. 20, Jer. xvii. 6 and Ez. xxvi. 20, but it is better to adhere to the usual meaning of יָשַׁב, especially as the fact of Jerusalem's being inhabited, is stated in a clause that immediately follows. She is regarded as taking her place first, and then her children are gathered to her.

VERSE 11

And they shall dwell in her, and there shall be no more utter-destruction.] חֵרֶם which is here and elsewhere translated "*utter-destruction*" is a very strong word, indicating the being given up or devoted to curse and ruin. Thus Ben-hadad is called in 1 Kings xx. 42.

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אִישׁ חֶרְמִי, rendered in our version, "a man whom I appointed unto utter destruction:" and the Edomites the people of God's "curse" (*See* Is. xxxiv. 5). The meaning of חֵרֶם is such destruction as is the result of being given up by God to curse. Such destruction shall be *in Jerusalem* no more.

These verses conclusively show that this chapter is not to be understood of "the Church;" for the Church never has known, nor can know, such curse: nor could the Church be described by physical boundaries such as the tower of Hananeel and the like.

And Jerusalem shall be inhabited in confidence. לָבֶטַח, επι or εν πεποιθησει or επι θαρσησει—Sept. πεποιθοτως.] This word* is used when the confidence of conscious security is implied, as when we trust in one whom we know to be able to ward off all danger, and to preserve us in quietness and rest. Contrast with this their previous condition when God said unto them, "in quietness and *in confidence*" (that is, confidence in My protection) "shall be your strength: and ye would not. But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses, etc." (Is. xxx. 15, 16).

VERSE 12

And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the peoples (עַמִּים) *that have fought against Jerusalem.*] The word here translated "*fought*" means "to go forth to war as an assembled host" (ὅσοι επεστρατευσαν επι Ἱερουσαλημ. Sept.). "*Assemble by troops*" is the marginal translation given in Ex. xxxviii. 8 and 1 Sam. ii. 22.

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* See remarks on this word in Notes on Psalm ii, (pp. 106, 107).

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Great stress is laid in Scripture on the vastness of the hosts assembled against Jerusalem on that day. See for example, Is. xxix. 5, 7. "Moreover, the multitude of thy strangers, . . . And the multitude of all the nations that *assemble to fight** against Ariel, even all that *assemble to fight* against her and her munition, etc." See Joel iii. 9, 14; and Rev. xvi. 13-16, where we find that the kings and armies (της οικουμενης ὁλης) of the whole Roman World are those gathered.† See also Is. xxxi. 4, where the intervention of the Lord on behalf of Jerusalem is described: "For thus hath the Lord spoken unto me, . . . so shall the Lord of hosts (צבאות) come down to *congregate hosts for war* (צבא) over, or for Mount Zion."‡ Observe the connection between צבאות and צבא in this passage, and compare Joel iii. "Thither cause Thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord."

The mode in which the destruction of the hosts of Antichrist is here described, is peculiarly solemn. "Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their

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* The same word as in Zechariah—צבא, is used in both these clauses. *Ariel* means "Lion of God"—the millennial name of Jerusalem, here *prospectively* applied; just as the saints are prospectively called in Daniel, "host of the heavens" (Dan. viii. 10), and "saints of the high places" (Dan. vii. 18).

† The right reading in this passage is, εισιν γαρ πνευματα δαιμονιων ποιουντα σημεια, ἃ εκπορευεται επι τους βασιλεις της οικουμενης ὁλης, συναγαγειν αυτους, etc.

‡ על used with לחם or צבא may mean to fight *against* a place as well as *for* a place. Here, however, it means "*for*." For examples of this use, see Judges ix. 17, 2 Kings x. 3, where על is used like ὑπερ in Greek, denoting protection spread *over* you, and, therefore, *for* you.

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holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth." But this is only one method of their destruction. "A great tumult from the Lord shall be among them" etc. Thus they shall destroy one another, "as in the day of Midian." See also, 2 Chron. xx. 23, where Ammon and Moab, after destroying the inhabitants of Mount Seir (Edom), destroyed one another. It should be noted that "the Assyrian" (Asshur—Antichrist), Moab, Ammon, and Edom are mentioned amongst the leaders of the last confederacy against Jerusalem" (*See* Ps. lxxxiii).

The destructive agencies, however, that will be employed in that great day of visitation will be manifold. "Hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?" (Job xxxviii. 22, 23). "Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire" (Is. ix. 5). "And the Lord shall be seen over them (Israel), and His arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south" (Zech. ix. 14). "A fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. . . . Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Thy judgments, O Lord" (Ps. xcvii. See also Habak. iii.). Multitudes of passages of like character might be quoted both in the Old and New Testaments.

The result of these judgments, the like to which the earth will never before have witnessed, will be *principally* manifested in the land of Israel; for it is "in the land,

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and on the mountains of Israel" that the strength of the last great head of the Gentiles is to be trodden under foot (*See* Is. xiv.). The special scene of "the wine-press" (which in the Revelation is said to be trodden "without the city," that is *Jerusalem*) is "the valley of Jehoshaphat" (*See* Joel iii.). *There* the destruction will commence, extending on to the place which will be the focus of the mighty gathering—*Armageddon.* Accordingly, in the Revelation, the stream of blood is described as flowing deep as the horse bridles for the space of a thousand and six hundred stadia, *i.e.*, two hundred miles (Rev. xiv. 20). "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with His chariots like a whirlwind, to render His anger with fury and His rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by His sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many" (Is. lxvi. 15, 16).

VERSE 14

And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem.] This is, no doubt, the right translation, and not "against Jerusalem," as in the Vulgate. It is true, indeed, that part of the tribe of Judah which is without the walls of Jerusalem will be found (probably through terror) united with the foe. See Zech. xii. 2. "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the peoples round about, also against Judah shall it (the cup of trembling) be in the siege against Jerusalem." Such is the literal translation of this verse, showing that Judah is with the assailants of Jerusalem. In a subsequent verse, however, we find that the Lord "opens His eyes" in mercy upon them; and they coalesce with Jerusalem, and become like a torch of fire in a sheaf, to the hosts in the midst of whom they are found. It is in reference

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to this that it is said, "Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem," *i. e.*, they shall help in destroying the foes of Jerusalem. In the twelfth chapter, "the tents of Judah" are contrasted with the inhabitants of Jerusalem.* (See this further considered in "Aids to Prophetic Enquiry," as advertised at the end).

And the wealth of all the Gentiles round about shall be gathered together, etc.] The wealth of those who had been gathered to Armageddon, and who had long been the spoilers of Israel and of the earth (*See* Is. x. 13). But the time will have come for the spoilers to be spoiled. Compare Jer. xxx. 16. "Therefore all they that devour thee shall be devoured; and all thy adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity: and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey."

VERSE 15

And so shall be the plague of the horse, . . . and of all the beasts that shall be in those tents, etc.] There are three great examples in the Scripture of the irrational creation being involved in ruin in consequence of connexion with man: first, at the Fall, when, because of

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* Bengel comments as follows:—"*The tents of Judah* shall be helped by the Lord first, see chapter xii. 7, and after that, they shall come to the assistance of the inhabitants of Jerusalem—shall enter the city—*in the city* to fight against the common enemy, most prosperously. Compare chapter xii. 6 and x. 5. The circumstance that the Vulgate translates the prefix ב *'against,'* has greatly darkened the meaning of this passage, since here it marks not the object—but the locality. But if any object to construe the feminine word תלחם in connection with יהודה which commonly is masculine, the apostrophe is easy—'And thou too, O Judah, shalt fight at Jerusalem.'"

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Adam's sin, the whole creation was subjected to vanity and the groan (Rom. viii.) :—secondly, at the Flood, when all creatures that had life, throughout the whole earth, were destroyed except the few that were with Noah in the Ark :—thirdly, when all those found in connexion with the last Apostates shall partake in their plague. It is a solemn warning to those who choose to connect themselves with evil, even though they may pretend that their *hearts* are not with it : for if things innocently connected with evil are destroyed, how much more those who are not innocently connected therewith. Yet if there be a circle of darkness, and if judgment is to overtake everything that is included within it, there is also a circle of light, of which Christ is the centre, and sure blessing shall rest upon all that is included therein. Under Christ, all creation shall at last be blessed : " the lion and the lamb shall feed together," and all the trees of the wood rejoice.

Some say that the animals mentioned in this passage are to be understood *symbolically*, as representing magistrates, rulers, etc.; because, they say, "a beast" is used in the Revelation to represent Antichrist. If the same principles are adopted in explaining a prophecy that is avowedly *symbolical*, and one that is avowedly *not* symbolical, we may as well close the Scripture at once ; for there will be no end to our folly. Well may Bengel say, speaking of this interpretation,—" What absurdities spring from seeking after a mystical sense, to the neglect of the literal ! It is true indeed, that Daniel and the Apocalypse do employ *in visions*, ' beasts ' as the symbols of magistrates and kings. But in the case before us, Zechariah is, confessedly, presenting to us, not a vision, but a lucid prophecy, in simple, and so to speak, historic, style. The rule of Scripture interpretation is

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this—never when a clear and simple prophecy concerning future things is formed for us, to sublimate away by the uncertainty of allegory the things that have been written "—(*Bengel in locum*).

VERSE 16

And it shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the nations that come against Jerusalem, etc.] These words clearly show that there will be a remnant left even among the nations that have been ruled over by Antichrist; consisting, doubtless chiefly, if not entirely, of those of irresponsible or tender age. Babylon and its land (Babylonia) and Idumæa are the only places assigned to utter and irrevocable desolation—monuments during the Millennium of the judgment that overtakes iniquity. Assyria (with the exception of *the Land of Babylon*) and Egypt are to be the subjects of the hand of Jehovah for blessing. "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt, and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the earth: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt My people and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel mine inheritance" (Is. xix. 24, 25). Here, two of the leading kingdoms that had been under Antichrist are declared, in the Millennium to be forgiven and blessed. A great part of the heathen too are mentioned as being spared, (*See* Is. lxvi.)—and doubtless those of irresponsible age in Christendom. By these and by Israel the millennial earth will be peopled. (Observe the abstract force of הבאים—*that come*).

Shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.] This will be done in token of the supremacy of Israel and

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Israel's King being owned by them. Israel will be the chief and the ruling nation. "To thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem:" and Jerusalem shall be called "the throne of Jehovah." There Christ shall reign, even "in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously."

The feast of Tabernacles was the most joyful of the feasts of Israel. It spoke of the trials of the wilderness being passed, and of their now resting in the land of their inheritance with all its goodness developed and bountifully poured forth around them—the hand of the Lord their God being turned on them for good. The coming up of Gentile nations to this feast, will be to witness and rejoice in the prosperity of Israel as chosen to be the inheritance of their God, and to own Israel's national supremacy. Their coming up, therefore, will be a test of their allegiance to the government of the Lord God of Israel. Refusal to come up will be treated as rebellion and punished.

In the Millennium, the government of Israel and of the nations will be, in the strictest and fullest sense, a theocracy. Not only will Israel themselves be under the direct control, *civilly* and *politically*, of the Lord, but, through them, as the chief and ruling nation, all the nations of the earth will be civilly and politically regulated. Israel, too, as holding a place of such peculiar honour and dignity, will have their *distinctness*, in this respect, marked by certain peculiar ordinances, the observance of which will not only distinguish them as God's peculiar people, but will be a test of their own obedience to Him who is, at the same time, their God and *their King*. The observance of these ordinances, such for example as "the Feast of Tabernacles," or

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other rites mentioned in Ezekiel, will no more bring them to Christ, or affect the blessings given to them in Christ, than the observance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper bring us to Christ, or secure the blessings given to us in Christ: for those blessings are possessed by us, and will be by them, from the first moment they believe. Yet neglect of ordinances appointed by God to us—ordinances, not saving, but appointed as memorials of the finished salvation that is in Christ, is disobedience and sin, and meets with chastisement. So will it be in Israel. They will have certain peculiar ordinances—*national* in their character, the neglect of which would involve them in disobedience to the Government of their King, as well as to the appointment of their God. They would be politically and civilly disqualified for their offices and privileges if they neglected the appointed ordinances. Can we be surprised that the ordinances appointed to Israel to mark their distinctness as God's peculiar people, and secondly, to test their obedience to Him as their Governor, should be commemorative (just as Baptism and the Supper of the Lord are commemorative to us) of the one great redemption. If we, instead of taking "the broken bread and the wine," had been directed to shed the blood of a lamb, the emblem would have been altered, but the great truth shadowed forth under the emblem would have remained substantially the same. It is true, indeed, that under the manifested government of the God of Israel, disobedience to His ordinances will be marked in a way different from now; and unless such disobedience be owned and repented of, it will be *summarily* and openly followed by chastisement. But this is a circumstantial difference arising necessarily from the fact that Israel, *then*, will be under the immediate and manifested government of God.

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Some have said that if, in the Millennium, *distinct* ordinances and privileges are granted to Israel, then it can be no longer true that Jew and Gentile are all one in Christ Jesus. But it must be remembered that they who are truly one as regards the eternal spiritual blessings "given in heavenly places in Christ," do not, therefore, cease to be distinguished by certain *earthly* differences whilst they remain on earth. In Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female, bond nor free; yet in earth, the man is to rule and the woman to obey: the man may speak in the Church, but the woman is to be silent. Onesimus the slave is to own Philemon as his master: yet they are one in Christ Jesus. Christianity is not Socialism, either now or in the Millennium. The Millennium is an earthly dispensation, and whilst the earth lasts, certain earthly distinctions will continue even among the redeemed. Indeed, the blessedness of order and subordination is one of the chief lessons taught in the Millennium. Then too, will be seen the difference between ritual ordinances appointed and directed by God, and the contrivances of ritualism invented and directed by man.

Forgetfulness of the future *national* distinctness and pre-eminence of Israel has caused many to marvel at, and even to condemn, the conduct of the Apostles in encouraging amongst the Jewish believers in Jerusalem, rites and practices that were not enforced among the Gentiles. Timothy was circumcised—Titus not. And the Apostle Paul at Jerusalem conformed to the ceremonies there practised by the converts from Judaism. It is evident that these ceremonies were practised by the Apostles and by the Pentecostal converts *whilst Jerusalem was for the last time being tried*, to prove whether it would receive the testimony to grace given by the Pentecostal Church; not as implying that there was any

difference between them and the Gentile converts in heavenly things (for there was no difference; they were one body in Christ) but they were practised in attestation of the great truth that the *national* privileges and *national* distinctness of Israel in the earth were not forfeited: that the day would yet come when they should become *in the earth* the centre of the earth's government, and when Immanuel's land should be the joy of all lands.

We can easily therefore see the reason why Israel as God's nation should have distinctive ordinances, and why the Gentile nations in the Millennium should be required to come up and unite in the great feast of Israel's joy.* It should be observed also, that when it is said that every nation and family of the earth shall come up every year to Jerusalem, it is not meant that every individual in each nation shall come up, but that the nations shall come up representatively. The action of nations and all corporate bodies is always spoken of in Scripture with reference to those who are officially appointed to express or carry out their will. Thus in the great gathering against Jerusalem, the nations concerned therein are represented by their armies. Every individual in each nation will not be present; yet each nation is said to come.

VERSE 17

And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth, etc.] This shows that there may be, and no doubt will be, disobedience among some of the nations during the Millennium, and shows how imperfect

* Festum tabernaculorum, quod etiam olim præ reliquis lætum et festivum fuit.—(*Bengel.*)

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a dispensation the Millennium is; and how needful it is to distinguish it from "the dispensation of the fulness of times" in the New Heavens and New Earth wherein righteousness is to dwell.

Disobedience, however, will be instantly checked by chastisement. It will not be allowed, as in the present dispensation, to progress and prosper. That "family" (משפחות) is here used in a national sense is evident from the next verse, where "the family of Egypt" is spoken of.

VERSE 18

And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain, etc.] This verse very conclusively proves (if proof were needed) that the millennial earth is not the "new" earth. The millennial earth will be the present Adamic earth marked by many of the physical characteristics that are at present existent. Thus the Nile makes Egypt to a great extent independent of rain; consequently, Egypt if disposed to be disobedient, might encourage themselves in the thought that the infliction sent on other disobedient nations, of rain withheld, would be no punishment to them. But there will be in the earth, and that in continued steady operation, a power that will at its own pleasure, either suspend or continue the laws of nature. Therefore, notwithstanding Egypt's independence of rain, Egypt if disobedient, shall suffer the consequences that follow the withholding of rain quite as much as other nations that are dependent on the coming of rain.

VERSE 20

In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD, *etc.*] That is, holiness

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shall characterize every development of human life, whether public, as represented by the bells of the horses; or religious, as represented by the vessels of the Lord's house; or private, as represented by every vessel in Jerusalem and Judah. Such will be Jerusalem and Judah—a fit centre, therefore, for the diffusion of light and blessing throughout all nations.

VERSE 21

And in that day there shall be no more the Trafficker in the house of Jehovah of hosts.] When we remember how Jerusalem, and the earth with her, had just emerged from the rule of the Ephah in which wickedness is to be established in the Land of Shinar, and how Babylon, whose merchants were princes etc., had filled the earth with lawlessness and evil, we may see the force of the Trafficker being expelled from the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, where he had formerly reigned. How different the condition of Jerusalem when it shall be seen as the ally, and finally the slave, of Babylon, from its condition in the day when it shall be established as the city of the great King—the seat and centre of holiness, righteousness and Truth!

[Note, 1912. The frequent mention of "Bengel" in the foregoing pages refers to the second of the several *Gnomons* that were projected by J. A. Bengel. This one, on the Minor Prophets, was brought out in 1753 by Bengel's son-in-law, Philip Burk, Dean of Kirchheim. The best known of the series, namely that on the New Testament, was by Bengel himself, and has been translated into English.

A *gnomon* is the sloping pointer of a sun-dial whose shadow indicates the time *as shown to us from heaven.* A book with that title, therefore, is intended to point out only just what the heavenly Word declares.]

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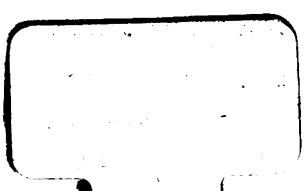
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